The Xing:

A COMPARATIVE APPROACH TO CHINESE THEORIES OF THE LITERARY SYMBOLIC

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SUMMARY

This thesis is intended to be a comparative approach to Chinese theories of the literary symbolic by way of a comprehensive investigation of the term *xing* 興 .

The *xing* has a long history of over two thousand years, is capable of protean meanings and generally considered very confusing. In the Introduction of the present work, a historical review of the study of the *xing* provides a map of the terrain in this area. Following this, a discussion of methodology is unfolded and suggestions are made that the general aim of this thesis is not to search for a "true" or "essential" meaning of the *xing*, but to examine how the word has actually been used in Chinese literary studies and to explore as much as possible its explicit and potential meanings. The ideal way of approaching an issue of this nature, the thesis suggests, would be a four-fold one, namely, the historical, descriptive, analytical and comparative approach. In this study, comparative approach is in the predominant position.

The first part is designed to reveal the meanings of the *xing* and a number of other relevant terms. Through a descriptive analysis of the statements by major critics in various historical periods and by invoking Western theories of literature, the thesis discusses the multiple meanings of the *xing*, the intrinsic relationship between these meanings and the nature of poetic creation which underlies them.

In the second part, a contour is drawn to demonstrate the mainstreams of Western theories of symbolism from Romanticism to Modernism. A number of important critics, such as Goethe, Coleridge, Carlyle, Mallarmé and T.S.Eliot, are discussed and analysed, thus preparing the ground for an all-round comparison. The comparative study in this work is conducted in two ways: 1) Western theories of symbolism are applied to the interpretation of Chinese concepts and 2) Examples are presented to demonstrate the amazing similarities in the way Chinese and Western critics deal with the issue of the literary symbolic, so as to attain a better understanding of both.

The *xing* not only has multiple meanings but its meanings also work on different levels. Hence, the comparison has to be a three dimensional one: *xing* is compared and contrasted with *fu* and *bi*, and these three terms are compared with parallel Western notions of sign, allegory and symbol; moreover, these comparisons are made on four levels - as rhetorical devices, as modes of writing, as aesthetic tendencies and as modes of interpretation.

In the concluding chapter, a summary is given highlighting several major points at which the East and the West come closest and an attempt is made to reveal the underlying theoretical reasons.

Contents

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Thirty years ago when I was initiated into the Chan,
I saw mountains as mountains
rivers as rivers.
Through personal experience, I came to know better
To see mountains not as mountains,
rivers not as rivers.
Now that I have achieved an understanding,
I see mountains remain mountains,
and rivers remain rivers

QINGYUAN WEIXIN

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arive where we started
And know the place for the first time.

T.S.ELIOT

1. Introduction

The earliest form of the word *xing*  as seen in the oracle-bone inscriptions, first appeared in the history of Chinese script as "four hands each holding a corner of a tray."[1] This might refer to a primitive ritual dance, in which a group of people hold a tray containing ritual objects and turn around[2] or it might mean that during such a dance dancers lift up the tray and at the same time utter an ejaculation which sounds like the present pronunciation of the word *xing* as the later version of the script may suggest.[3]

However, it is in the *Zhou li* or the *Rite of Zhou* that the word *xing* is seen for the first time in history to be used as a special terminology and is listed as one of the *Liushi* 六詩 :

> The Grand Master teaches the *Liushi*: *feng*, *fu*, *bi*, ***xing***, *ya*, and *song*.[4]

The *xing* in this context, has been interpreted as one of the six types of ancient poetry classified in accordance with their different uses on different occasions or with diverse varieties of music or musical instruments accompanying the poetry.[5] Then in the *Da xu* or the Great Preface of the *Shi jing*, the *Liushi* is seen to have turned into the *Liuyi* 六義 , (the six principles):

> The *Shi* has the *Liuyi*: *feng*, *fu*, *bi*, ***xing***, *ya*, and *song*.[6]

The discussion of the *xing* and the poems believed to belong to the category of the *xing* in the *Mao zhuan* initiated a tradition of two thousand years. Over this long period, poets, critics and students of the classics, drawing on new achievements in literary creation, have continuously contributed from diverse

perspectives to the theory of the *xing*, which virtually constitutes the nucleus of the Chinese theory of the literary symbolic. In their numerous discussions of the theory of the *xing*, they seem to have been content with offering their own views and incorporating them, no matter how different their views may be, into the theories set forth by their predecessors rather than refuting each other's theories. This situation remained unchanged up until the beginning of the present century when the traditional theories, especially those championed by the Han scholars, were subjected to ruthless attack.

What we have seen in the study of the *xing* and its correlative concepts from the beginning of this century, is a constant pursuit of the sole "real" or "essential" meaning of the term. In Chinese this meaning is often called the *ben yi* or "the root meaning."[7]

Generally speaking, there have been three ways of attempting to reach this sole true meaning. Some critics seem to have equated the original meaning of the word *xing* with the true or essential meaning of the *xing* as a literary term. They have proposed to unearth the primordial meaning of the word through archaeological studies. Since everything is supposed to have an origin, presumably there should once upon a time have been such an original meaning of the *xing*. In reality, it is almost impossible to say with any certainty which meaning is the original one. It may have been lost in history and can in no way be retrieved. What those critics who have devoted themselves to the archaeological studies of the word *xing* have found are actually no more than various interpretations of the archaic forms of the character of the *xing*.[8] For one thing, those interpretations are highly speculative and not verifiable. For another, even if they were proved to be the correct interpretations of the word, there is still no certainty as to whether they are the original meanings, as there might well be other, earlier forms which would probably be open to quite different interpretations. Moreover, the original meaning of the *xing* as a word is not necessarily the original meaning of the *xing* as a literary term. A more feasible way, I would suggest, is perhaps to try to locate the earliest

possible meaning of the term, that is to say, to study the earliest use of the word in the context of literary or quasi-literary criticism.

Another popular approach to the study of the *xing* is to go back to the *Shi jing*. Since the *fu*, *bi* and *xing* are believed to have been first used as literary terms in the study of the *Shi jing*, their "true" meaning should be available in the poems of the *Shi jing*. Therefore a sensible way to discover it, one would think, is to examine and analyse those poems labelled with these terms, to study their common characteristics and then to generalize conclusions, which will turn out to be the "true" or "essential" meanings of these terms. This approach may be described in a Heideggerian circle: What the *xing* is should be inferrable from the poems of the *xing*. What the poems of the *xing* are we can come to know only from the nature of the *xing*. What the nature of the *xing* is can be gathered from a comparative examination of actual *xing* poems. But how are we to be certain that we are indeed basing such an examination on the *xing* poems if we do not know beforehand what the *xing* is? Many critics are seen to have exactly been following this circle. There is of course nothing wrong with this kind of study or, we may even follow Heidegger in insisting that "to enter upon this path is the strength of the thought."[9] But while we enjoy "the feast of thought," we must also be prepared to consider two points. First, the *fu*, *bi* and *xing* are three terms which were first introduced by the Han Confucians in their interpretations of the *Shi jing*. That means their use of the term was arbitrary at the very beginning. The ways in which *Shi jing* poems are composed do not naturally and rigorously fall into the three categories of the *fu*, *bi* and *xing*. Hence it would be quite impossible to derive a general theory of the *fu*, *bi* and *xing* as three different ways of writing by examining poems in the *Shi jing*. Second, the meanings of the *xing* as revealed in the study of the *Shi jing* do not necessarily dictate or define the later use of the term. As time passes, its connotations are bound to change, to grow and to expand, sometimes beyond recognition. Therefore it would not be sufficient to confine the study of the *xing* to the study of the *Shi jing*.

A rather similar approach that has been seen since the beginning of this century is to seek the nature of the *xing* by way of a comparative study between the *Shi jing* and relatively recent folk songs. Since a great proportion of the *Shi jing* poems are believed to be of folk-song origin, it seems quite reasonable that modern folk songs, which usually involve fewer linguistic and cultural obscurities than the ancient classical ones, may serve as "living specimens," from which a general conclusion about the *xing* may be drawn. This idea, however, seems to me to be faulty from the very beginning. Without any doubt, such a comparative study would increase our knowledge of ancient folk songs. Nevertheless, the *xing* as defined by the Han scholars acquires its meaning only within a certain structure; i.e., in their peculiar way of interpreting the *Shi jing* poems. Lifted out of its special structure, the *xing* as they defined it would become quite irrelevant. One of the major conclusions of such a study is that the *xing*, instead of having "great significance in subtle language" as claimed by the Han scholars, is actually "a meaningless opening" of a poem.[10] Since every poem, without exception, necessarily has an opening, what seems to have been left in distinguishing the *xing* from other sorts of poems is just its "meaninglessness." Thus the study of the *xing* itself has become totally meaningless.

There is certainly no denying the achievements that have been made over the past several decades. A lot of new problems have been broached; new ways suggested and tried; and the understanding of the *Shi jing* and the *xing* greatly deepened and broadened. However, although modern critics have used different approaches and dealt with the problem from different perspectives, most of them have at least one thing in common: the pursuit of the sole correct meaning of the term. They seem to have been under the illusion that somewhere in this world there is a meaning of the *xing* which is completely objective, universally applicable and perpetually valid, a meaning that precedes words, exists beyond human experience and transcends time and space. And the whole task of a student of the *xing* is to find this meaning.

Such a meaning simply does not exist. Such an illusion is rooted in a traditional idea of language which, according to Wittgenstein, can be expressed as follows:

> Every word has a meaning. This meaning is correlated with the word. It is the object for which the word stands.[11]

But there are different kinds of word. Literary terms such as the *xing*, symbolism, romanticism and realism do not belong to the category of "object language" speaking of objects but belong to the category of "metalanguage" speaking of language.[12] When we examine the studies of the *xing* in history, we need to be aware that those speeches about the *xing* are invariably focused on the code with which critics express their ideas of the *xing* rather than on the object the *xing* is supposed to refer to. Such a term as the *xing* does not have a referent. It certainly has a meaning or multiple meanings; but the meaning of the *xing* is not the thing or the idea it stands for. The meaning of the *xing* is the sum total of its possible uses: but there need be no one meaning that is associated exclusively with this particular term and is at the same time common to all its possible uses. Hence it is not possible to reach a general theory or a general explanation of the phenomena which have puzzled us, and to give the term a crisp definition so that the problem would be solved once and for all. We will not be able to solve the problem. What we are able to do is to dissolve the problem, to clear up the conception which has been attached to it. Our aim is to attain a sympathetic understanding of what has already been said on the topic of the *xing* through a descriptive analysis of the uses of the *xing* in various historical contexts. Therefore an ideal approach to an issue like the *xing* would be a fourfold one: historical, descriptive, analytical and comparative.

To investigate the use of a term is to study its use in history, i.e. to put the problem in question in a certain time and space. The historical details of an environment in which a particular problem was raised and tackled will certainly inform us of the determinants of the problem, which in turn will help us with the

comprehension of its implications. The situations of the Early Tang politics and poetry, for instance, are crucial in understanding precisely why and in what sense Chen Ziang advocated the *xingji*.

Ideally, a historical study will allow us to go back mentally to the time when the problem arose so that we can, so to speak, have a close-up picture of the environment and the intellectual spirit of the time. Yet in reality, history is like an enormous game of jig-saw, numerous pieces of which are missing. However hard we may try, we will not be able to reconstruct a picture clear enough for us to gain a thorough knowledge of the problem with which we are confronted. This is why the method of race-milieu-moment advocated by Hippolyte Taine and others[13] often seems to be too broad and vague to be accurate. Nevertheless, a historical study will at least help us erect a barrier around the problem in question so that anachronism and willful distortion may be avoided.

When we look at the actual use of the *xing* in Chinese history of literary criticism, we find there is no single essence, or essential feature which the *xing* marks. What we have are various observations made by generations of critics from different perspectives under different circumstances. Accordingly, what we need to do is not to look for the essence which does not exist, but to describe those observations. To describe, however, does not mean merely to repeat or to paraphrase what has been said in history. We need to explore their possible implications, to reveal not only what has actually been said but also what must have been said in particular fashions so as to cross the gap caused by time and space and to reach a sympathetic understanding of the meanings of those observations. The meaning of a word, as John Stuart Mill put it, is "either the meaning which it bears in common acceptation, or that which the speaker or writer, for the particular purpose of his discourse, intends to annex to it."[14] Such a meaning, we are convinced, can be attained only through descriptive analysis of the actual use of the word in the particular area of discourse under consideration.

By analysis we here mean that we need to analyse the different roles the word *xing* has assumed in different "language games" as Wittgenstein would put it.[15] The word *xing* does not only have multiple uses but has been used on different levels of meanings. One of the main reasons why the *xing* has been considered highly "puzzling and entangling" resides in the misconception that the term has or should have a single use, functioning on a single level. In fact, as the present study will show, the *xing* may be used at least on four levels: as a poetic device, as a mode of writing, as an aesthetic tendency, and as a mode of reading or reception. On the first level, the *xing* is taken as an element of a poetic work; on the second, the *xing* is observed when the poetic work is considered as a whole. A poem which is identified as a *xing* on the first level may not be counted as such on the second level. That is to say the role of the word *xing* in the first language game does not correspond to the role of the word *xing* in the second language game. Just as the "meaning" of the king in the game of chess is entirely exhausted by its role in the game, so the meaning of the word *xing* is entirely exhausted by its role in the language games that are played with it. By looking at how the *xing* and other correlative terms are actually used in the language games, we may in all likelihood reach a comprehensive understanding of the meaning of the *xing*.

While we deny that there is some essence which the word *xing* expresses or represents, we would accept Wittgenstein's notion of "family resemblances,"[16] by which we here mean all possible uses of the word *xing*. As this study will show, the word *xing* may mean in different circumstances "evoke," "emotion," "image," "intention" and "meaning beyond word," and so on. And these meanings are all interrelated in one way or another and form family resemblance relationships in their uses. In a large sense, to understand the Chinese theories of the *xing* is to understand these relationships.

Comparison as a universally effective method is not just one of the approaches in literary studies, but is a constant element which works with or without our notice. A comparative study between literatures without affinity is

usually called a "parallel study," to be distinguished from "influence study" and "reception study." A parallel study may focus on the comparison between two authors or two pieces of work in two cultures or it may focus on the examination of two theories of similar phenomena in literary studies. James Liu wrote,

> I believe that comparative studies of historically unrelated critical traditions, such as the Chinese and Western, will be more fruitful if conducted on the theoretical rather than practical level, since criticism of particular writers and works will have little meaning to those who cannot read them in the original language, and critical standards derived from one literature may not be applicable to another, whereas comparisons of what writers and critics belonging to different cultural traditions have thought about literature may reveal what critical concepts are universal, what concepts are confined to certain cultural traditions, and what concepts are unique to a particular tradition. This in turn may help us discover (since critical concepts are often based on actual literary works) what features are common to all languages, what features are confined to literature written in certain languages or produced in certain cultures, and what features are unique to a particular literature. Thus a comparative study of theories of literature may lead to a better understanding of all literature.[17]

While I would agree with Liu's claim that a comparative study of historically unrelated traditions will be "more fruitful" (and perhaps more feasible) if conducted on the theoretical level and with the general aim that such a study will lead to "a better understanding of all literature," I do not think it feasible and necessary to say which critical concepts are universal, which are confined to certain cultural traditions, and which features are unique to a particular tradition. Literary concepts are the use of literary terms in literary studies. In this sense, every concept is unique. There can be no "universal concepts" shared by all critics in all cultures all times, just as there are no two words in two languages which are completely identical in their every usage. The word "good" exists perhaps in every language, but there is no universal concept of what is "good." "Literature" may be counted a possible universal concept in all cultures and languages. But we know that in different cultures it may have different connotations and even in one culture, it may have different meanings for different critics in different historical periods as James

Liu himself has shown.[18] When Tzvetan Todorov said "perhaps literature does not exist,"[19] he certainly meant that a universal concept of literature does not exist.

What we can do is, therefore, through the study of one tradition, to attain a better understanding of another and eventually to reach a mutual sympathetic understanding of both. The *Shi jing* has it that "the stones of other hills can work the jade."[20] Robert Frost once said, "I never saw New England so clearly as when I was in Old England." What the parallel study means to me is precisely to use the stones of other hills to work one's own jade, or to use the other as a mirror in order to have a better vision of oneself. Looking for homologies or analogies is perhaps an integral part of a comparative study; but to list, say, seven similarities plus three dissimilarities, is by no means the ultimate goal of a parallel study.

This thesis falls into three parts. The first part deals with the meanings of the *xing* in various language games through a chronological study of its evolution in the history of Chinese literary criticism. The second part is intended as a corresponding study on the Western side. Yet the emphasis is shifted from the ancient to the modern, as it has often been suggested that modern Western poetry and poetics since the Romantic era are more comparable with classical Chinese poetry and poetics.[21] The third part is designed to be an "overt" comparative study of symbolic traditions in China and the West, to be contrasted with the "implied" comparative study which has been carried out in the previous two parts.

In a study like this, there can be no hard and fast rules as to which critics should be included and which should not. My choice is made in accordance with my judgement of the roles each critic has played in the development of the theory of the *xing* or symbolism. I have tried to sketch a coherent line that runs throughout each tradition. It is of course arguable whether such a line exists or not. In fact, one may also argue whether a unified symbolic tradition exists in Western literature or even whether there is such a thing as Western literature at all. However, to draw such a line, no matter how hypothetical it may be, will help us understand the relationships between the key figures who have played prominent roles in the

development of the symbolic traditions as well as the theories set forth by each critic.

As has been said, to deal with such a problem as the *xing* or symbolism, an ideal method would be a fourfold one: historical, descriptive, analytical and comparative. Yet in this study, the stress is placed upon descriptive analysis and comparative study while historical study is taken as an auxiliary means. Obviously a comprehensive historical study needs much more time and space than I am allowed.

A comparative study makes considerable demands on the translation. The translator's difficulties in this thesis begin with the word *xing*, which has many, sometimes, vague meanings. For the sake of consistency, the Chinese word *xing* has been preserved throughout. However, when it occurs in contexts where it may adequately be translated by an English word, translations are provided and, as a rule, bracketed. Other Chinese literary terms of similar nature are treated in the same way.

Goethe once said to Eckermann, "the world is now so old, so many eminent men have lived and thought for thousands of years, that there is little new to be discovered or expressed. Even my theory of colours is not entirely new. [...] my merit is, that I have found it also, that I have said it again, and that I have striven to bring the truth once more into a confused world."[22] The world is very old indeed, yet the interpretation of the world can always be new. If I may claim that I have spoken out once more the truth and thrown a new light into the old and confused world of the study of the *xing* and symbolism, my labour will be more than rewarded.

I. Meaning of the *Xing*

2. The Han Dynasty

In the first year of the reign of Emperor Wu (140-87 BC), Dong Zhongshu, a noted Confucianist, proposed to the throne that "all not within the field of the Six Disciplines or the Arts of Confucius, should be cut short and not allowed to progress further." By the year 136 BC when Empress Dou, the advocator and protector of Taoism and Legalism passed away, Dong's proposition was finally adopted and carried out. Taoism and Legalism along with other philosophical schools were banned from official philosophical studies and Confucianism alone became the dominant ideology of the Han empire. A corps of "Erudites" [Boshi], i.e. learned scholars specializing in the "five classics" (the *Wujing: Shi, Shu, Li, Yue, Chun qiu*), was created as special government posts. Under the emperors that followed, the number of "Erudites" kept increasing.[1] Encouraged by the emperors, the studies of Confucian classics began to flourish. The invention of paper in the year 105 and its wide spread use by the 3rd century greatly boosted classical studies.

However, the revival of classical studies should not be understood as a simple restoration of Confucius's doctrines. Confucius was once quoted as saying that he was "not a creator but a transmitter."[2] In fact, he created his own school of philosophy through transmitting or rather, interpreting what had come down to him from time immemorial. Likewise, his pupils in the Han dynasty created a new type of Confucianism by transmitting the teachings of Confucius himself and other pre-Han Confucian scholars such as Mencius and Xun Zi. Under their influence, the five classics gained a new significance. They were not just ancient materials used by Confucius for teaching purposes. The *Shi* was not just a collection of ancient songs sung and played in various ceremonies, quoted at diplomatic meetings or used

by Confucius as a sort of food for thought. According to Xun Zi, the *Shi* expressed the intention of the ancient sages.[3] In the opinion of Mencius, the *Shi* was the history of an earlier time than that recorded in the *Chun qiu*, and Confucius extracted the "principle" from the *Shi* and wrote the *Chun qiu*. Therefore, the *Shi*, like the *Chun qiu*, contained "great meanings in subtle language."[4]

Thus the *Shi* assumed a sublime political function. "The poets' intentions to advise and criticize were invoked by Mencius and Xun Zi as the teachings of the sage kings to give admonition to the rulers of their own times."[5] This theory was fully accepted and inherited by the Han scholars. Sima Qian, for instance, wrote, "The three hundred poems of the *Shi* were mostly written by ancient sages and saints in adverse circumstances."[6] Dong Zhongshu openly declared that "the *Shi* should be regarded as the law of the whole world."[7] Here the *Shi* was first interpreted as the expression of the intentions of the sage kings in ancient times and then employed as admonition to current rulers. The *Shi* began to play a more immediate, more active role in Chinese politics. In the writings of the Han dynasty, one can find the *Shi* employed as, so to speak, a substitute for memorials of remonstrance.[8]

Dong Zhongshu, the standard bearer of the Han philosophy, regenerated primordial Confucianism, basically a political and ethical philosophy, by fitting it into a theoretical framework of the metaphysical and cosmological philosophy of the *Yin-yang* school which was founded by Zhou Yan at the end of the Warring States period and had since exerted considerable influence on the world of thought. Two prominent principles of Dong's philosophy, the principles that "Heaven (Nature) and man affect each other"[*Tian ren gan yin*] and "Things of the same genus energise each other" [*Tong lei xiang dong*,][9] made a notable impact on the interpretation of the *Shi*.

The changed attitudes of the Han scholars towards the *Shi* and their new philosophy are two major factors that make their poetic theories differ from those of Confucius as well as those of the later dynasties. However, their interpretations

were long regarded as the only authority and were never seriously challenged. Even today, it is often seen that people mistake their interpretations for the "author's meaning" or the "original meaning." Such is the case of the interpretation of Confucius's use of the word "xing."

2.1 Pre-Han: Confucius

Confucius mentions the word *xing* twice in his *Lun yu* in relation to the discussion of the *Shi jing*:

> The Master said, "Be inspired [*xing*] by the *Shi*; establish yourself with the ritual; and achieve perfection with music."[10]

> The Master said, " Young men, why do you not study the *Shi*? The *Shi* enables you to be inspired [*xing*], to observe [*guan*], to behave in society [*qun*], and to express grievances [*yuan*]. It helps you in serving your father at home and your sovereign abroad. (By learning the *Shi*,) one may acquire a good knowledge of the names of birds and beasts, plants and trees."[11]

Bao Xian (6 BC- AD 65.) of the Han dynasty interprets the *xing* which appears in the first passage quoted above as "qi," a word with a meaning no less ambiguous than "xing" itself. However, in his comment on this passage, he makes it clear that what he means by "qi" is "to begin," saying "moral self-cultivation should begin with the learning of the *Shi*."[12] As to the *xing* in the second passage, He Yan quotes the pseudo-Kong Anguo interpretation: "*Xing* is in the sense of drawing analogies to associate (things) of the same category [*yin pi lian lei*]."[13] These interpretations are echoed by later scholars and remain unchallenged until Zhu Xi of the Song dynasty offers different explanations. Zhu interprets the *xing*s in both passages as "qi." In his annotation to the first passage, he writes, "Poetry originates in (human) nature and feeling, which may be good or evil. Its language is easy to understand,... touching and affecting. Therefore, it is used initially to arouse the learner's feeling of love for the good and hate for the evil ..."[14] Here Zhu suggests that *xing* is in the sense of "qi," which in turn has two meanings: "to begin" and "to arouse."

In his annotation to the *xing* in the second passage, Zhu Xi does not adopt Kong's interpretation but sticks to his previous one and paraphrases it as "gan fa zhi yi," i.e., to stimulate (or, arouse) one's intention and feeling.

Modern scholars are divergent in their opinions as to what Confucius means by his use of the word *xing*. Guo Shaoyu, Lo Genzhe, Arthur Waley, James Legge, James Liu, among others, follow Zhu Xi's interpretation and read Confucius's *xing* as "to arouse" "to stimulate" "to incite" or "to inspire." Holzman prefers the older commentators Bao Xian and Kong Anguo and translates the *xing*s in the two passages into "begin with" and "make metaphorical allusions" respectively.[15] Zhu Ziqing, Li Zhehou and Liu Gangji adopt a synthetic attitude and argue that Confucius's *xing* includes all these meanings. Li and Liu assert that Kong's and Zhu's interpretations "are both derived from a consideration of Confucius's *Lun yu* and Confucius's thought as a whole." Therefore, they are both "in line with the essence of Confucius's theory" and can "complement each other."[16]

Bao Xian and Zhu Xi both interpret "xing" as "qi." However, in Bao, "qi" means simply "to begin" while in Zhu, "qi" means "to arouse" as well as "to begin." And Zhu's interpretation, I believe, is well grounded, because these two meanings of *xing* do exist in the pre-Han literature. In the poem no. 245 of the *Shi jing*, for example, we see these lines:

245.7 Our sacrifice, what it is like?
Some pound (the grain),
some bale it out,
and then we roast,
we broil, in order to start the following year.
(Karlgren, p.201.)

The word "start" in the last line in Karlgren's translation is "xing" in the original.[17] As to the other meaning of *xing*, i.e. "to arouse," it is seen more often in the pre-Han literature.[18] And these two meanings are actually very close to each other in Chinese as they are in English. In fact, sometimes they can be synonyms, as in English "begin" and "arouse." Since the sense of "arouse" is much more common than the sense of "begin," I would suggest that "to rise or to arouse" [qi] is an

earlier meaning of the word "xing" in the pre-Han Chinese literature. On the physical level, it means to get up, to rise, to raise, etc. Metaphorically used, it means to arouse, to stimulate, to incite, to evoke and to inspire emotionally or intellectually. In Confucius's *Lun yu*, for instance, we have these passages:

> When he (Confucius) was in Chan, their provisions were exhausted, and his followers became so ill that they were unable to rise (*xing*, in the original).[19]

Obviously, here the meaning of *xing* as "rise" is on the physical level. And in the next passage:

> When those who are in high stations perform well all their duties to their relations, the people are aroused (*xing*, in the original) to virtue.[20]

the meaning of *xing* as "arouse" should be understood on the spiritual level. In the works of Mencius, the word "xing" appears in fifteen places altogether and at least four times the word should be understood on the spiritual level in the sense of "inspire" as in the following passage:

> These two made themselves distinguished a hundred generations ago, and after a hundred generations, those who hear of them, are all inspired (*xing*, in the original) in this manner.[21]

On the other hand, evidence has not been found in the pre-Han literature that will warrant the pseudo-Kong Anguo's interpretation for the *xing* as "drawing analogies to associate (things) of the same category" or as Holzman translates it, "making metaphorical allusions." In the *Shi jing*, for example, the word *xing* appears fourteen times, but not even once does the *xing* suggest the meaning of "making metaphorical allusions." In the works of Mencius, Xun Zi and Mo Zi, we have not found that the word *xing* has the meaning of "making metaphorical allusions." Therefore it may be concluded that before the Han dynasty, the word "xing" did not have the meaning of "drawing analogies to associate (things) of the same category," and its earliest meaning available to us is "qi," in the sense of "rise" or "arouse," "stimulate," "inspire," and the like.

Having proposed this, we may go further and enquire whether in Confucius's usage the *xing* means to arouse emotionally or intellectually.

As has been said above, Zhu Xi's interpretation of the *xing* as "gan fa zhi yi" may imply the arousal of both emotion and thought. Modern students of the Confucian *Lun yu* fall into two groups. One group maintains that the *xing* is emotionally targeted; whereas the other assumes the object of the *xing* to be moral intents or sentiments. Waley's translation of the *xing* into "incite people's emotions" indicates that he belongs to the first group and James Legge's translation "to stimulate the mind" may list him in the second group. Li Zhehou and Liu Gangji argue that Confucius's *xing* "appeals mainly to the emotional,"[22] but I believe the opposite may be right. First, we may enquire in what context Confucius uses the term *xing*. He does not use the *xing* to denote a mode of writing poetry. He uses it in the context of the relationship between the *Shi* and the reader. Therefore, his *xing* should be classified in the hermeneutical category and the possible meaning of the *xing* as response of the poet to the affecting stimulus of the outside world should be excluded. And who are those readers? Are they people who go to the *Shi* for its poetic quality or for aesthetic experience? Certainly not. They are readers like Confucius himself, who, with a practical purpose in mind such as "to answer questions on one's own account" and "to serve one's father at home and one's sovereign abroad," make use of the *Shi* as an instrument in their political or diplomatic encounters, or as food for thought in their search for moral and ethical principles. For their pragmatic purposes they quote the *Shi* out of context to suit the occasion, often completely disregarding or distorting what the poems mean. What is aroused by the verses from the *Shi* is irrelevant to the intrinsic emotional elements of the poems. This is why Confucius says to the great puzzlement of many modern students, that "The Three Hundred Poems (i.e. the *Shi*) can be summed up in one line: 'no evil thoughts,'"[23] in spite of the fact that there are a lot of love poems, poems of elopement and love tryst, etc., which would definitely be considered licentious by Confucian thinkers. Therefore, what Confucius means by *xing* is not

emotionally targeted. Secondly, Confucius's intention can be further clarified through an examination of his practical criticism of the poems in the *Shi*.

The first example will show Confucius's attitude towards the *Shi* and what he means by being "inspired" by the verses.

> Tzu-kung said: "'Poor but does not flatter; rich but does not swagger.' What do you think of that (motto)?' The Master answered: "It's all right, but 'Poor, but delighting in the Way; rich, but loving the rites' is better." Tzu-kung: "Is that what is meant by the poem which goes
>
> As if cut, as if filed.
> As if chiselled, as if polished?
>
> The Master: "At last I can talk to Ssu (i.e. Tzu-kung) about the *Shi*; when you tell him one thing, he knows what is coming.'"[24]

The verses quoted by Tzu-kung in this passage are taken from poem no.55 in the *Shi jing*, the first stanza of which reads as follows,

> Look at that cove of the K'i (river),
> the royal fodder and the creepers are luxuriant;
> elegant is the lord,
> he is as if cut, as if filed,
> as if chiselled, as if polished;
> how freshly bright, how refined,
> how imposing, how conspicuous:
> elegant is the lord,
> never can I forget him.
>
> (Karlgren p.37)

Judged by its face value, this poem describes a man's elegance and his virtue. Mao's annotation has it that it is a eulogy of a real person--Duke Wu of Wei (r. 811-757 BC).

Here I shall not concern myself with what the poem may imply, or to whom it may refer, or whether Tzu-kung is justified when he compares a description of a handsome gentleman's manner and virtue to moral improvement. What concerns us here is that the way in which Tzu-kung is inspired or enlightened by the poem represents an intellectual process rather than an emotional one. In other words, what in the poem acts upon Tzu-kung's mind is not its emotional but intellectual elements. His quoting of the poem shows that he fully understands what Confucius has told him and his way of using the *Shi* wins Confucius's approval. According to

Confucius, one can talk about the *Shi* only to people like Tzu-kung, because "when you tell him one thing, he knows what is coming." Now, in the process from "one thing" to "what is coming," there exists, so to speak, a key-point at which one's association is triggered. In Tzu-kung's case he comes to learn the truth that there is no limit to moral improvement and, therefore, one should not be complacent with what one has already known. To illustrate the truth, he quotes the poem which has inspired him in the process of cognition of this truth, a process which is totally intellectual. The next example is also an exchange of ideas which takes place in a conversation between Confucius and one of his disciples. This example will bring us closer to the point I am making.

> Zi Xia asked: "what is the meaning of the lines:
> What lovely, artful smiling!
> What clear and beautiful eyes!
> Plain ground for coloured patterns.'
> The master said, "The business of painting follows (the preparations of) the plain ground." Zi Xia asked, "Ritual comes afterwards?" The Master said, "It is Shang (i.e. Zi Xia) who inspires me. From now on I can talk with him about the *Shi*."[25]

Confucius answers Zi Xia's question by way of an analogy: just as one has to prepare plain ground before painting, one must first possess fine innate qualities before talking about any acquired embellishment such as making up, dressing up and having literary talent. From this Confucian interpretation of the poem, Zi Xia goes a step further and comes up with the argument that ritual, one of the most important concepts advocated by Confucius, should be based on the grounds of loyalty and faithfulness. This is what Confucius wants his disciples to be able to do after studying the *Shi*. Feeling inspired, Confucius declares Zi Xia to be a man with whom he can talk about the *Shi*. Just as Confucius is inspired by Zi Xia, Zi Xia is inspired by the verses. From those lines describing the beauty of a beautiful woman, he draws a major principle in politics and in moral cultivation. This is just what Confucius means by "shi ke yi xing" (i.e."The *Shi* can inspire.") From a few pieces of imagery to principles of ethics and politics runs a whole process of knowledge acquisition which is triggered by imagery and propelled by inferences. It

is a kind of intuitive rather than logical knowledge, yet it is obtained through intellect, rather than imagination; it is knowledge of the universal rather than knowledge of the individual. It is not knowledge of individual things but knowledge of the relations between them and it is productive of concepts rather than images. This is a special mode of thinking which is often seen in ancient Chinese philosophical writings. There are two things A and C in a proposition. A is a piece of imagery or something particular and C is a general principle concerning ethics or politics. From A to C is a process of association; it is not syllogistic inference that works in the process. Between A and C, there is a missing link B. The jump from A to C is possible because C is analogous to A in some respects and the analogy is attained through intuition. Thus, according to Confucius, when one is inspired by the *Shi* or, more exactly, the imagery of the *Shi*, a process of associative thinking will be started or triggered intuitively and the process will lead to the acquisition of knowledge. Therefore, in Confucius, the *xing* plays the role of starting the process rather than the process itself, which begins with imagery and ends up in concepts. The *xing* appeals to the intellect rather than to emotion or aesthetic feelings.

Having said that, I wish to make it clear that I have no intention of asserting that Confucius was never moved emotionally by the *Shi*. He was. But one must bear in mind that at the time of Confucius, the concept of poetry was music and words in one and this is a common characteristic of the early song-lyric in all nations alike. We know that the *Shi jing* is a collection of songs. In the song-lyric, music and words play different roles, "the words supply the idea, and the music furnishes the emotion, and both compromise on a common theme,..."[26] Because the music and the words compromise on a common theme, students of the *Shi jing* often get confused[27]; but Confucius in his mind distinguishes them quite clearly. Whenever he mentions the emotional effect of the *Shi*, he refers to its music. Once he criticises the music of the kingdom of Cheng, saying "For the music one ... would do altogether away with the tunes of Cheng,.... For the tunes of Cheng are licentious..."[28] On another occasion he comments on the first poem of the *Shi jing*,

> The Master said, "The Kuan-tsu is expressive of enjoyment without being licentious, of grief without being hurtfully excessive."[29]

Although it is ambiguous here whether Confucius is referring to the poem itself or the music that usually goes with the poem, I believe that Confucius is talking about the music. My belief is attested by a passage from Xun Zi's *Yue lun* 樂論 :

> Hence, human beings cannot help feeling happy. Happiness wants expression. To express without guidance leads to chaos. The ancestral kings hated chaos, so they created the music of the *ya* and the *song* to guide it and made sure that *its sound was sufficiently joyous but not licentious; and its words are sufficiently expressive but not heretical....* so that it is able to arouse man's good nature and deprive the evil influence of its expression.[30]

Here Xun Zi also makes clear distinctions between the music and the words of the *Shi*. According to him, the music and the words play different roles. The music (the sound) appeals to man's feelings and the words appeal to man's intellect. What is especially worth noticing here is the fact that Xun Zi uses similar language as Confucius uses to describe the music created by the "ancestral kings." We know that the poem "Guan ju" is believed to be one of the poems created by the "ancestral kings."

To sum up, I would like to make the following points:

1. The "Burning of the Books" left a great chasm in Chinese cultural history. As a result, Han Confucians' interpretation of pre-Han literature exerted an enormous influence on the history of Chinese classic studies. It is advisable to be on guard and not to take their interpretations for the only reliable interpretations. Rather, it would be better for us to look for the historical reasons of their interpretations.

2. The term *xing* as Confucius uses it in relation to his discussion of the *Shi jing* in the *Lun yu* is "qi," which in turn bears two meanings very close to each other - "to begin" and "to rise" or "to arouse." In Confucius and in pre-Han literature, the *xing* does not have the meaning of "making metaphorical allusions" or "drawing analogical inferences." These meanings arise no earlier than the Han dynasty.

3. Confucius's *xing* is a way of using the poetry rather than a mode of poetic expression. He talks about poetry from a reader's point of view.

4. In Confucius, *xing* appeals to man's intellect, rather than his emotion. We have to wait until the Six Dynasties before we find that the *xing* has the meaning of "arousing emotions."

5. A synthetic interpretation of the term *xing* as used by Confucius originates in an unfortunate neglect of the fact that in Confucius's time, poetry, i.e. the song-lyric, was a combination of music and words. The music and the words play different roles and compromise on a common theme.

2.2 The *Mao Zhuan*

The *Mao zhuan* refers to the annotations made by Mao Heng and Mao Chang on the *Mao shi* or the Mao edition of the *Shi jing*.

In the *Mao shi*, of all 305 poems of the anthology, there are altogether 116 poems designated as "xing." As a rule, after the opening lines of these 116 poems, the commentator would write, or rather, would be recorded as saying, "xing ye," meaning "this is *xing*." What the two-character comment means is not explained in the *Mao zhuan*. In its notes to the poem no.236, the *Mao zhuan* interprets the word "*xing*" as "qi," a traditional interpretation of the word. Since the *xing* may have many other meanings, we do not know whether this interpretation also applies to the two-character comment "xing ye." To know its exact meaning, we need to find out where it comes from.

Mao zhuan's *xing* may have three possible sources: Confucius, the *Zhou li* and the *Da xu*. In the *Zhou li*, there are two places where the *xing* relevant to the present study is mentioned: the *xing* as one of the *Liushi* and the *xing* as one of the *yueyu* (literally, music language, maybe in the sense of locution). In the former, the *xing* is one of the six types of poetry classified either according to the

different music which goes with the poetry or according to the different uses which the *Shi* may have. In the latter, the *xing* is one of the artistic modes of speech descending from the common practice of quoting lines from the *Shi* often out of context to express one's intention at diplomatic meetings during the Spring and Autumn period.[31] Neither of these cases suits the *xing* as employed in the *Mao zhuan*. *Mao zhuan*'s *xing* does not denote a type of poetry; otherwise the two-character comment "*xing* ye" should have been placed before a poem or after a poem rather than in the middle of a stanza as it is now. The position of the two character comment indicates that it refers to the opening lines. On the other hand, *Mao zhuan*'s *xing* cannot be one of the modes of artistic speech because the *Mao zhuan* is interpreting the poem or teaching the use of the poem. Nor is it possible that *Mao zhuan*'s *xing* is taken from the *Liuyi* (the Six Principles) expounded in the *Da xu* (the Great Preface) The date of the *Da xu* has been energetically debated. According to the *Siku tiyao* it cannot be earlier than the Western Han (206 BC- AD 24). Probably it came out after Mao Chang.[32] Mao Heng, who lived in the Warring States period, would certainly not use the meaning that arose much later than his own time. What is more, the history of the terms *fu*, *bi* and *xing* indicates that before the Han dynasty they had never been used together as a group of literary concepts. Except for Confucius, no major scholars or philosophers had ever used the term *xing* in the study of the *Shi* or other literary writings. Throughout the Han dynasty, except in the dubious *Zhou li* and *Da xu*, these three terms had never been seen or used as terms of literary criticism. Mao Heng used the term *xing* to label a big proportion of poems in the *Shi jing* but never used the other two. Sima Qian quoted the *Shi jing* frequently, but never mentioned these terms. Ban Gu noted the principle of "political remonstrance" of the *Shi jing*, but never discussed these terms. When he talked about the *fu*, he meant it to be either as a new literary genre which was a "flow from ancient poetry"[33] or, simply, "to recite (a poem) without singing (it)."[34] Both senses are irrelevant to its later use as a way of poetic composition or as a way of reading the poetry. Wang Yi talks a lot about the *xing*

in his discussion of Qu Yuan's poems, but never touches upon the other two. Zheng Xuan gives definitions of all three in his annotation to the *Zhou li* and also quotes Zheng Zhong's definitions of the *bi* and *xing*; yet in his commentary on the *Mao shi*, he follows the *Mao zhuan* closely, uses the *xing* only and never tries to put his definitions into practice. What can be learned from these facts is perhaps that the *fu*, *bi* and *xing* as a triplet of concepts in literary criticism did not take shape until the East Han dynasty and at its beginning the Han scholars themselves did not really know very much about these terms. They might have been aware very vaguely of the existence of three different modes of poetic expression or rather, three different ways of interpretation of the *Shi jing*. and they borrowed three ready-made terms from the so-called *Liushi* to describe these three ways. As to the nature of these terms and the distinctions between them, they did not seem to be very clear as can be seen from Zheng Xuan's definitions where the differences between the *bi* and the *xing* have not so much to do with the form as to do with the substance of a poem. Wang Yi, another classic scholar of the same period, did not mention the *fu* and *bi* at all. This also explains why Zheng Xuan, having made the definitions, failed to put them into practice in his exegesis of the *Shi jing* poems. But one thing they were certainly sure about was that the *xing* could be a way of reading the *Shi jing* poems since Confucius had already set an example. For these reasons, I would suggest that *Mao zhuan*'s *xing* comes directly from Confucius.

Indeed, there are quite a few things common in *Mao zhuan*'s use of the term *xing* and Confucius's use of the word. First, in both cases, the *xing* as a term of criticism stands and operates all alone, not as one of the triplet with the *fu* and *bi*. Confucius did not use the *fu* and *bi* in his discussion of the *Shi*; neither did the *Mao zhuan*. If the *Mao zhuan* had taken the *xing* from the *Liushi* or *Liuyi*, it should also have taken the *fu* and *bi*. Secondly, in both Confucius and *Mao zhuan* the primary emphasis falls on hermeneutics, rather than on poetics. Mao Heng and Mao Chang were both masters of the classics, whose job it was to preserve, transmit and expound the *Shi jing* and other classics. They were interested in finding "great

meanings in subtle language." They could have little interest in the way in which the poems of the *Shi jing* or poems in general were written or should be written. They picked up the term "*xing*" from Confucius to describe their interpretation of the poems in the *Shi jing*. Thirdly, in both cases, the *xing* plays the role of a bridge that connects two apparently irrelevant things: what is there and what is not there. What is there are the images of the poem. What is not there are philosophical, ethical or moral principles. The one is visible, tangible, material, and concrete; the other invisible, intangible, immaterial and abstract.

As in the case of Confucius, *Mao zhuan*'s *xing* had the meanings of "beginning" and "stimulating," "arousing" or "inspiring." It means "beginning," because those lines designated as *xing* begin a poem and also are the starting point of association. Of all 116 poems tagged as the *xing*, there are 113 poems in which the *Mao zhuan* makes the comment "*xing* ye" right after the opening lines in the first stanza. It also means "to inspire," because the images, the natural objects, acting upon one's faculty of reason, would trigger a series of ideas and thoughts which are not readily available in the text of the poem. These are also the major characteristics of the *xing* as Confucius uses it in his discussion of the *Shi*.

However, *Mao zhuan*'s *xing* differs from Confucius's in a number of aspects. First, Confucius's *xing* applies to the poems of the *Shi jing* as a whole; whereas in the *Mao zhuan*, the use of the *xing* is confined to a portion of the poems of the *Shi jing*. Secondly, although in both cases, the *xing* is looked at from the reader's point of view, in Confucius it is first and foremost one of the functions of the *Shi*; whereas in the *Mao zhuan*, it is essentially a way of reading the *Shi*. Thirdly, in Confucius the *xing* implies a process of associative thinking. From a description of a woman's beauty, Confucius draws the principle that "ritual comes afterwards." This process is triggered by the imagery of the poem and propelled by association, regardless of logic; whereas in the *Mao zhuan*, the process is a logical one. The moral is drawn logically by the interpreter through analogical inference and the analogy is not considered arbitrary but intrinsic and is made out of the

attributes of objects. Finally, in Confucius, the *xing* invariably leads to a general principle or the illumination of a truth; whereas in the *Mao zhuan*, a *xing* poem usually ends up in a moral embodied in a historical account.

There are various reasons for the differences. Many concepts, including the concept of poetry, had changed. Mencius's two principles in interpreting the *Shi* - to let one's own thought go to meet the (poet's) intention and to know the author as well as his time[35] - undoubtedly exercised great influence.[36]. But the most direct and powerful reasons may have to be sought in Han society itself, in its new ideology. After all, Han Confucian scholars were men of their own times and their interests were inevitably moulded by the urgent moral, social and political problems that beset the newly unified empire.

Whatever the reasons might be, the Han scholars inherited from Confucius the concept of the *xing*, put it into the practical criticism of the *Shi jing* and expanded its import under new circumstances.

Let us look more closely into what the *Mao zhuan* means by *xing* through the study of some of the poems in the *Shi jing* designated by the *Mao zhuan* as the *xing* and see what characterizes a *xing* poem. Let us first examine a typical *xing* poem which also happens to be the first of the *Shi jing*.

1.1 Kwan-kwan (cries) the ts'u-kiu bird,
on the islet of the river;
the beautiful and good girl,
She is a good mate for the lord.
(Karlgren, p.2)

After the first two lines, the *Mao zhuan* has these comments,

> "This is a *xing*, ... The ts'u-kiu bird is sincere in love, yet it observes the separation of sexes,.... The queen of King Wen was very pleased with the king's virtue. She maintains a harmonious relationship with the king in every aspect and never flaunts her beauty. Being prudent and firm, she lives in seclusion, like the ts'u-kiu bird which observes the separation of sexes."[37]

In a typical *xing* poem in the *Shi jing*, a stanza is conspicuously divided into two parts. The first part is a piece of imagery which is usually taken from nature and

begins the poem. The second part describes a human situation. These two parts are placed in stark juxtaposition with no connectives whatsoever to link them. The relation of the two parts is therefore oblique. In the above poem, according to the *Mao zhuan*, the description of the ts'u-kiu bird is used as a comparison: the virtuous bird is analogous to the virtuous queen of King Wen in the belief that they both observe the separation of sexes. This is what a reader can infer from the text as far as he knows that ts'u-kiu bird is a special bird, and the "lord" in the poem refers to King Wen and the "girl" to his queen. The male and female bird which are deeply in love while living separately serves here as a vehicle which carries the moral of how a good couple should behave. But this is not all. The *Mao zhuan* continues,

> Then the force of civilization will affect the whole world. When man and wife abide by the principle of the separation of sexes, father and son will love each other; when father and son love each other, ruler and minister will respect each other; when ruler and minister respect each other, the royal court will be on the right course; when the court is on the right course, the influence of the sage kings will prevail.[38]

The relationship between the male and female birds is analogous to the proper and harmonious relationship of man and wife, which in turn, reveals an even greater significance. This significance cannot be directly obtained from the text but can be derived only through the process of an analogical inference starting [*xing*] with or inspired [*xing*] by a piece of imagery, usually a description of natural objects or a shorthand description of natural scenes. It would be outside the scope of this thesis to discuss whether *Mao zhuan*'s interpretation of the poem is valid or well founded. Through a consideration of the interpretation, it may be concluded that to the *Mao zhuan*, the *xing* plays the role of a bridge, which crosses the gap between the opening lines of a stanza and the remainder. The opening lines vividly represent a concrete natural world, and the remainder describe a human situation which is not to be understood literally but rather allegorically. In itself it is not the tenor but the vehicle, or to put it more exactly, that part of the human situation also has a double

function. On the one hand, it is the tenor of the vehicle - the natural object. On the other hand, it is a vehicle of a "greater meaning" which is not there in the text and can be obtained only beyond the text, when the reader has been stimulated, aroused and inspired. This process is directed toward the determination of meaning and raises questions about the extralinguistic truth value of literary texts.[39] It certainly falls into the category of hermeneutics rather than poetics.

One of the conspicuous features of *Mao zhuan*'s *xing* consists in the use of the external world. The *xing* lines may be either a description of a natural object (no.6.1) or a shorthand of natural landscape (no.41.1) or an event involving both natural objects and human activities (no.3.1).

6.1 How delicately beautiful is the peach-tree,
brilliant are its flowers;

41.1 The northwind is cold,
the falling snow is voluminous.

3.1 I gather the kuan-er plant,
but it does not fill my slanting basket;
(Karlgren, pp.4, 27, 3.)

These descriptions, according to the *Mao zhuan*, are all analogous to human situations or the human internal world that follows and therefore, they are all designated as "xing." Sometimes a whole stanza can be a *xing*. In poem No.72,

72.1 There I gather the ko creeper;
one day on which I do not see him
is like three months.
(Karlgren, p.49.)

The *Mao zhuan* comments, "This is a *xing*. Ko is the material for linen. (To gather the ko creeper) may be a small matter; yet one day on which I fail to see the ruler, I shall be apprehensive that I might fall a victim to slander."[40] The *xing* like this is very close to allegory as there is a one-to-one correspondence between what is in the poem and what exists beyond.

Where a poem starts with a description of natural objects or scenes, which, however, bears no analogical values, the poem is not considered a *xing*, e.g. poem no.65,

65.1 That glutinous millet (has ears that are) hanging down;
oh the sprouts of that panicled millet!
I am walking slowly,
In the core of my heart I am (shaken:) agitated;
(Karlgren, p.45.)

The *Mao zhuan* explains that this poem is written by a minister of the Zhou court when he passes by the ruins of the former Zhou palace and sees millet growing all over. In other words, the first two lines are descriptions of natural objects which the author actually sees and which bear no analogical meaning. This is not a *xing*.

If a poem starts with a description of natural objects or scenes which bears analogical senses, but is not followed by a human situation, it would not be considered as a *xing*.

5.1 The wings of the locusts,
they are multitudinous,
it is (suitable:) right,
that your sons and grandsons should be numerous.
(Karlgren, p.4.)

According to the *Mao zhuan*, this poem alludes to the virtuous queen of King Wen. Like the locust, the queen was completely free from jealousy and therefore she, also like the locust, has a lot of descendants. Kong Yingda discusses this poem and comments, " This is actually a *xing*. The *Mao zhuan* does not say it is a *xing* because, as Zheng Xuan says in reply to Zhang Yi, there is no human situation in it. Poems like this are actually *xing*."[41] However, this is not what the *Mao zhuan* means by the *xing*.

If in a poem the comparison between a natural object and a human situation is evident, it is not a *xing* as can be seen in poem no.52,

52.1 Look at the rat, it has its skin;
a man without manners -
a man without manners,
why does he not die?
(Karlgren, p.33.)

The *Mao zhuan* is not always consistent. Here and there, a poem which starts with a description of natural objects and bears analogical meanings is left out of the *xing* category, as in the case of poem no.18. There are also poems whose opening lines have no analogical meanings but are tagged as *xing* (e.g. no.94).

After all, the *xing* was picked up by the masters of the classics for the purpose of interpreting the poems in the *Shi jing* and was not a principle of composition strictly adhered to by poets who wrote those poems.

To sum up, the *xing* according to the *Mao zhuan* involves two parts in a poem. One is a description of the natural or external world. The other is concerned with human situations or an internal world. These two parts are usually placed in stark juxtaposition. The relationship between the two parts is analogous and enigmatic. The first part begins a poem and also raises analogical inferences resulting in a political, ethical or philosophical moral which is to be drawn beyond the text.

Mao zhuan's concept of the *xing* is of primary importance to Chinese theories of poetry, and it comprises all the major elements that make up Chinese poetics - the description of natural objects or landscape, real or imaginary; the juxtaposition of an external, objective world with an internal, subjective world; the enigmatic as well as analogical relationship between these two worlds, great meanings residing in insignificant things and meanings beyond words. All these features were to be repeated and expounded at different times by later critics during the two-thousand-year history of the literary concept of the *xing*.

2.3 Zheng Xuan and Zheng Zhong

The *Mao zhuan* inherited from Confucius the use of the *xing* in the sense of "beginning" ,"stimulating," "arousing" and "inspiring" or "evoking" and used it in the interpretation of a big proportion of poems in the *Shi jing*. Zhu Ziqing argues that "The *xing* in the *Mao zhuan*'s comment 'xing ye' has two meanings: to begin and to draw an analogy. When these two meanings are both taken into account, we have the *xing*."[42] Zhu's argument can be traced back to Kong

Yingda, who wrote, "The *xing* means to begin (or to arouse);" and "Where the *Mao zhuan* says 'xing ye' and the *Zheng jian* (or Zheng Xuan's commentary) says 'xing zhe', they mean to draw an analogy. *Mao Zhuan*'s *xing* is intended to be employed as an analogy of a certain situation. The *xing* and the *yu* (or analogy), are different in terms but identical in actuality."[43] However, the *Mao zhuan* never explains explicitly that the *xing* means to draw analogy. Very seldom does it imply that the *xing* has the meaning of drawing an analogy and even in those cases, to draw an analogy should be taken as a possible product of the interpretation rather than a necessary property of the *xing* as we may see in the first stanza of poem no.35,

35.1 In repeated gusts comes the East wind,
bringing clouds and rain ;
I have striven to be of the same mind (as you),
you ought not to feel anger;
(Karlgren, p.22.)

Under this stanza, the *Mao zhuan* has these comments: "This is a *xing*. ... When the *yin* and the *yang* are in harmony, the East wind will come. (Likewise,) when man and wife are in a harmonious relationship, the family will be established and offsprings procreated.[44] If the *xing* here implies the meaning of drawing an analogy, it must be the inference of the reader rather than the intention of the *Mao zhuan*.

It was not until the East Han that the *xing* began to be understood and interpreted as the making of analogy. Zheng Xuan (AD 127-200), in his commentary on the *Mao shi*, straightforwardly interprets the *xing* as the drawing of an analogy. He is often seen using sentence patterns such as "xing zhe, yu." meaning "This is a *xing*, i.e. to explain and to make clear by drawing an analogy." or "gu yi xing yi," meaning "hence, it is employed as a *xing*, or analogy." In poem no.11, after the opening lines of the first stanza,

11.1 The feet of the *lin*!
you majestic sons of the prince!
Oh, the *lin*!
(Karlgren, p.7.)

Zheng Xuan comments, "This is a *xing*, i.e. to explain by drawing an analogy between the honesty and faithfulness of the prince and the *lin* (an auspicious animal)."[45] And in poem no.12, after the first two lines of the first stanza,

12.1 It is the magpie who has the nest,
it is the kiu bird who inhabits it;
this young lady goes to her new home,
a hundred carriages meet her.
(Karlgren, p.7.)

Zheng Xuan makes the following comments,

> When a magpie constructs a nest, it makes the framework in winter and finishes it by the following spring, just like a king who gradually builds up his merits and achievements. Hence, it(the magpie) is here employed as a *xing*, or an analogy.[46]

In his annotation to the *Zhou li*, Zheng writes, "The *Xing* means to create through resemblance."[47] He defines all three terms the *fu*, *bi* and *xing* . In his definition of the *xing*, he equates it with analogy,

> In the *xing* good things are cited as analogy to imply a praise of current merit, when one has seen it but wishes to avoid suspicion of flattery.[48]

The *xing* discussed here refers to a type of ancient poetry used in a special occasion. It is recorded in the *Zhou li*,

> When a grand obsequies takes place, the Grand Master [Dashi, an official] leads the blind musicians [Gu 瞽] in performing a *xing* [廞].

Zheng Xuan annotates,

> *Xing* [廞] is here in the sense of *xing* [興]. It means to state the life story of the deceased king. Hence, the *xing* is a kind of poetry which is devoted to the praise of the king's achievement.[49]

It seems that during such a ceremony the Grand Master would display objects related to the deceased king while telling his life story. It is only natural that in those poems composed or recited for such a special occasion, objects would be presented to remind the audience of the king's merits. This perhaps accounts for Zheng Xuan's definition of the *xing* that "in the *xing*, good things are cited as

analogy to imply a praise of current merit." Obviously, this *xing* should be differentiated from the *xing* used in the *Mao zhuan*, which is, as has been said, inherited directly from Confucius's way of using the word and which refers to the opening lines of a poem or a stanza rather than the whole poem. In his own commentary on the *Shi jing*, Zheng Xuan follows the *Mao zhuan* closely and raises no objections to Mao's annotations and the way in which the term *xing* is used. But here in annotating the *Zhou li*, he offers a definition of the *xing*, which shows that he is discussing a related but basically different term bearing the same name. This fact explains why his interpretation of the *xing* poems in the *Shi jing* often fails to agree with his definition of the *xing*. The *xing* in the *Mao zhuan* and the *xing* in the *Zhou li* are two different concepts and should not be confused.

Other Han critics also interpret the *xing* as the use of analogy. Wang Fu (c. AD 90-165) writes, "In the poetry and the *fu* (here, referring to a literary genre which was in great vogue in the Han period.)... one resorts to the *xingyu* to express one's intentions fully."[50] He virtually takes the *xing* and *yu* (analogy, metaphor, figure of speech) as one and the same thing. The pseudo-Kong Anguo's interpretation of Confucius's *xing* as "drawing analogy through categories" is typical of the Han reading of the term. No wonder Kong Yingda has asserted that "the *xing* and *yu* are different in name but identical in actuality."

The reason why in the Han dynasty the *xing* began to be understood as "analogy" or "the use of analogy" lies in the fact that the word *xing*, apart from its meaning of "rising," "arousing" and "stimulating," is also synonymous with the word "ju" 擧 , meaning "to raise" "to hold up" "to recommend" "to present" and "to cite." Confucius is recorded as having taught his pupils that when one aspect of a thing is presented [*ju*], they should know the others by themselves.[51] Mo Zi defines the "pi" 辟 , or the use of analogy as "presenting [*ju*] other things for illustration."[52] Sima Qian, in his comments on

Qu Yuan's poems, wrote, "What he presents [*ju*] is near at hand; yet the significance implied is far-reaching."[53] And he is actually applying the principle proposed in the *Yi jing*, or the *Book of Changes*, to the criticism of Qu Yuan's poems. The things presented or displayed to illustrate a point are believed to be analogous to those illustrated. Kong Yingda puts it very well when he sets out his definition of the *xing*,

> The *xing* means "qi," i.e., to arouse or to begin. All those pertain to the *xing* which evoke one's heart (feelings) by using categorical analogies as in some poems of the *Shi jing* where plants, trees, birds and beasts are presented [*ju*] to manifest one's intentions.[54]

It should be pointed out here that his definition is a synthetic one, which amalgamates Confucius's use of the word, the Han Confucians' reading of the term as well as post-Han critics' interpretation of the concept. However, one thing seems quite clear: *Xing* means to express one's intentions by means of presenting [*ju*] nature objects.

For the Han scholars, the *Shi jing* was, a "jing," i.e. a Confucian canon, in which great principles of administering a state were to be sought and from which historical lessons were to be drawn. They tended to look at the oblique relationship between the natural objects in the opening lines and the human situation that follows from a didactic perspective. The opening images were interpreted as things presented [*ju*] with an intention of illustrating a point. Thus, the meaning of the term "*xing*" had changed significantly from Confucius's, as well as the *Mao zhuan*'s, "beginning," "arousing," "stimulating" or "inspiring" into Zheng Xuan's analogy or metaphorical comparison. Zheng Xuan and his contemporaries, such as Zheng Zhong and Wang Yi, whenever they discussed the *xing*, never even once hinted that the *xing* had the meaning of "beginning" and "inspiring," but unanimously read it as the use of analogy to illustrate a point. This explains why, in the *Shi jing*, some

poems left untagged by the *Mao zhuan* are designated as *xing* by Zheng Xuan.

Take poem no.28,

28.1 The swallows go flying,
uneven-looking are their wings;
this young lady goes to her new home,
far I accompany her out in the open country;
I gaze after (her),
can no longer see her,
the tears are like rain.
(Karlgren, p.16.)

This is not a *xing* by *Mao zhuan*'s criteria. However Zheng Xuan explains that the second line means that "(swallows are) spreading their tail-wings" and continues to comment that "this is a *xing*, i.e. an analogy, of the way in which Daiwei (a historical figure), who is going to get married, looks at her own attire."[55] Poem no.204 is also tagged as *xing* by Zheng Xuan,

204.1 In the fourth month, there is summer.
In the sixth month, there is the (passing) retreating heat;
Were the ancestors not men?
Why are they callous to me?
(Karlgren, p.155.)

Zheng comments,

> "zu" 徂 means to begin (here Karlgren interprets it as "retreating.") In the fourth month, summer comes in and it is getting very hot by the sixth month. This is analogous (*xing*, in the original) to a person who becomes wicked gradually and not overnight.[56]

Although on the whole Zheng Xuan looks at the *xing* from a reader's point of view, occasionally he seems to be also enquiring into the ways in which a poem is written. Poems nos.2 and 12 are two examples. In his comment on no.2, he writes, "Here the property of *ko* creeper is intended as an analogy [*xing*]." In poem no.12, he comments, "Hence it is employed as an analogy [*xing*]."

Apart from giving his own definitions of the *fu*, *bi* and *xing*, Zheng Xuan also quotes Zheng Zhong's version in his annotation to the *Zhou li*. Zheng

Zhong, who was also an Eastern Han scholar but lived a little earlier than Zheng Xuan, is quoted to have defined the *bi* and the *xing* as follows,

> The *bi* means to use a thing to draw an analogy; the *xing* means to use a thing to suggest a situation.[57]

Zheng Xuan does not tell us where these quotations come from and in what context Zheng Zhong makes his definitions. Like Zheng Xuan's own definitions, Zheng Zhong's were never put into practice. We are in no position to learn exactly their full connotations. However, his definitions are worthy of our attention in several respects. First, it seems that Zheng Zhong has made an attempt to deal with the *bi* and *xing* from a writer's point of view. Secondly, both in the case of the *bi* and the *xing*, the emphasis is laid on the use of objects or things in poetic expression. Thirdly, an effort is made to distinguish the *bi* and the *xing* by their different ways in which objects are treated. In the *bi*, the comparison between the thing employed as an analogy and its analogical meanings is made explicit; whereas in the *xing*, the comparison is implicit. Fourthly, to characterize the *xing*, he chooses the word "tuo" 托 , a word which perhaps finds no happy translation in English but may roughly mean to use something, usually a nature object or scene, as a surrogate for the writer's intentions. And therefore it should be accepted as a kind of symbolic way of expression.

Zheng Zhong's use of "tuo" was shared by his contemporary Wang Yi, who contributed a lengthy discussion of the *xing* in his preface to his annotated edition of the *Li sao*, or *Encountering Sorrow*, by the great poet Qu Yuan.

2.4 Wang Yi and the *Li Sao*

Wang Yi (fl. 110-120) wrote of the *Li sao*'s artistic presentation,

> The writing of the *Li sao* takes the *xing* as it is employed in the *Shi jing*, drawing analogies through categories. Hence, propitious birds and fragrant plants are paralleled to loyalty and integrity; ominous fowls and fetid things are compared to flatterers and slanderers, divine beauties are likened to princes; fair maidens are compared to wise ministers; dragons and phoenixes stand for the virtues; whirlwinds, clouds and rainbows are inferred to the ignoble. Its language is mild and elegant; its significance bright as the moon. Those who are of a noble character will not fail to express their admiration for the lofty spirit of its author and his literary graces while feeling sadness for his misfortune and sympathy for his aspirations.[58]

Burton Watson was certainly right when he made the remark that "Chinese poetry, one might say, started twice," referring to the *Shi jing* and the *Chu ci*, or the *Song of the South*.[59] But he was just repeating what had been said one thousand five hundred years ago. In his *Wen xin diao long*, Liu Xie points out, "After the sound of the *feng* and *ya* was stilled, nothing emerged to continue the tradition. Then remarkable writing arose in great profundity and splendour and that was the *Li sao*."[60] In another chapter of the same book, he argues that literary history "changes with the *Sao* [*Li sao*]."[61] Zhong Rong, another critic of the time, looks upon the *Shi jing* and the *Li sao* as the two sources of Chinese poetry before his era. However, at the same time, Chinese critics have always held that the *Li sao* is in the great tradition started with the *Shi jing*. Wang Yi asserts that Qu Yuan composed the *Li sao* by following the principles set up by the five classics.[62] According to him, not only in principle, but even in diction did Qu Yuan base himself on the Classics and he lists examples to show the correspondences in phraseology between them. His views may perhaps be explained by the fact that he lived in a time when Qu Yuan had been attacked by such formidable scholars as Ban Gu, who accused Qu of "parading his talents and advertising himself" and of "using myths and legends which are not recorded in Confucian classics."[63] When the Confucian canons were regarded as the supreme criteria of the right and the

wrong, Wang Yi had little to resort to in order to defend Qu Yuan other than to prove that his works completely conform to the norms of the classics.

Liu Xie saw eye to eye with Wang Yi. He wrote, "King Xiang of Chu trusted the slanderers whereas the Sanlu (Qu Yuan's official title) remained loyal and firm. He followed the example of the *Shi* and created the *Sao* (i.e., *Li sao*), which employs both the *bi* and the *xing* for the purpose of remonstration."[64] Zhu Xi of the Song dynasty disagreed with Wang and Liu and argued that the *xing* as used in the *Shi jing* could scarcely be found in the *Li sao*. He put it bluntly,"In the *Shi jing*, the *xing* is seen more frequently than the *bi* and *fu*; whereas in the *Chu ci*, the *xing* is less often seen than the *bi* and *fu*."[65] In his annotation to the *Li sao*, he declared that he had found no examples of the *xing* of the *Shi-jing* type at all. He maintained that what Wang had claimed to be the *xing* in the *Li sao* were all what should be called *bi* in the *Shi jing*.[66] His view was echoed by Zhu ziqing, who said that "In the *Chu ci*, there is actually no such thing as the *xing*."[67]

Their difference, it seems to me, can be explained by their differing views of the concept of the *xing*. Wang Yi, like other Eastern Han Confucians, looked upon the *xing* basically as metaphorical comparison, which suggested and implied great political or moral significance. The hidden meaning was not readily obtainable but had to be sought after. Zhu Xi, on the other hand, looked on the *xing* as an opening technique in poetic composition, which had no semantic relation with the rest of the poem. By Zhu Xi's definition, there should be no *xing* in the *Li sao*, which unlike the short lyrics in the *Shi jing* is a lengthy poem running up to 374 lines in 187 distiches. By the criteria of the Han Confucians, there certainly is. The *Li sao* is full of images, natural and supernatural, which, according to Wang Yi, carry metaphorical, symbolical or allegorical meanings. Lines like

97. Eagles do not flock like birds of lesser species;
How can the round and square ever fit together?[68]

are regarded as symbols of the speaker's integrity and abundant worth and his incompatibility with the vulgar and insensitive world which can in no way understand him.

11. I dressed in selinea and shady angelica,
And twined autumn orchids to make a garland.

These lines are not supposed to be read literally. Qu Yuan is here believed to use external objects as symbols of his inner virtue. The image of the ruler, who refuses to heed the speaker's warning, is compared to someone sunk in deep sleep,

253. Deep in the palace, unapproachable,
The wise king slumbers and will not be awakened.

The whole poem of the *Li sao* is highly allegorical, especially in that portion denoted to the description of a fantastic aerial journey in which the speaker pursues to a variety of legendary beauties. The journey itself can be read allegorically as a process of seeking after the truth from a modern reader's point of view. Yet according to Wang Yi, the use of allegory can be seen mainly in the substitution of one thing for another, e.g., ominous fowls and fetid things for flatterers and slanderers and fair maidens for wise ministers. Wang interprets the "fair ladies" the speaker pursues as referring to upright officials and honest recluses whom he is seeking as possible allies to join him in just and honest politics.

Thus Wang Yi made a first effort to apply the concept of the *xing* to the criticism of a literary text other than the *Shi jing*. Because of the distinguishing characteristics of the *Li sao* and the *Chu ci*, a new paradigm of interpretation somewhat different from that of the *Shi jing* began to be established in Chinese poetics. This paradigm is traditionally known as the practice of "*mei ren xian cao*," meaning the practice of committing one's intentions to the description of so-called "fair maidens and fragrant plants," or the convention of erotico-political allegory.

As has been said, the *xing* as applied in the interpretation of the *Shi jing* is looked upon by the Han Confucians as analogy or metaphorical comparison which takes the form of what can be called evocative juxtaposition. Both sides of the

comparison are displayed in the text, but the relationship between the two parts is left unexplained. Here in the *Li sao*, the *xing* is also taken as metaphorical comparison. Yet of the two sides to be compared, only the vehicle or the signifier is given while the tenor or the signified is open to various readings. The poems are interpreted allegorically because in most cases a literal reading is not feasible. In the case of the *Shi jing*, on the contrary, most of the *xing* poems can be read on a literal level. According to Wang Yi, the *xing* as shown in the *Li sao*, whether in the form of metaphor, or symbol, or allegory, invariably points to the real world, to real people and events. He interprets the "fair one" as referring to King Xiang of Chu. In his notes to the following lines,

271. For they wear mugwort and cram their waist bands with it;
While the lovely valley orchids they say are not fit to wear.

275. They gather up muck to stuff their perfume bags with;
The spicy pepper-plant they say has got no scent at all.

Wang tells us that Orchid [*lan*] alludes to Zilan, the son of the king and Pepper [*jiao*] to Zijiao, a minister and accomplice of Zilan, both are the poet's political enemies. Other critics hold different opinions. Zhu Xi, for example, prefers a general reading of these images rather than referring to specific historical figures.[69] Wang Yi's interpretation is certainly in line with the Han convention of looking on poetry as history in a different form. Besides, there are other lines from this poem that seem to give support to Wang's interpretation,

313. I thought that orchid was one to be trusted,
But he proved a sham, bent only on pleasing his masters.
He overcame his goodness and conformed to evil counsels:

As in the case of Zheng Xuan's interpretation of the *Shi jing*, the relationship between the images and their metaphorical, symbolical or allegorical meanings, according to Wang Yi, is always inherent and rooted in the special qualities of things.

203. The whirlwinds gathered and came out to meet me,
Leading clouds and rainbows, to give me welcome.

Wang Yi comments, "the whirlwinds are unpredictable and used as analogous [*xing*] to wicked people." "The clouds and rainbows are an evil atmosphere comparable to flatterers."[70]

Besides his interpretation of the relationship between man and wife as a metaphor for the relationship between the ruler and his ministers, Wang Yi also has metaphysical reasons,

> "Women belong to the *yin* and do not act independently, just as, when the ruler acts, the minister follows. Thus they have been used as a comparison with ministers."[71]

You Guoen has pointed out that this theory comes from the *Book of Changes* in which the second hexagram *kun* 坤 is interpreted as "the way of the earth, the way of the wife, the way of the ministers."[72] Helhmut Wilhelm has also noted, "According to the symbolism of the *Book of Changes*, the officials stand to the ruler in the relationship of *yin* to *yang*. Love affairs are therefore frequently used to symbolize a ruler-official relationship."[73]

Of all the Six Principles [the *Liuyi*] which are supposed to be embodied in the *Shi jing*, Wang Yi picks out the *xing* only. What he means by *xing*, as we have seen, is metaphorical or symbolical substitution or replacement, which differs from the evocative juxtaposition we find in the *Shi jing*. The *Li sao* is full of images, which, according to Wang Yi, should not read literally. They should not be perceived as material copies or things, but as implied comparisons with virtue or vice in the human world as we see in the following lines:

> 113. I made a coat of lotus and water-chestnut leaves,
> And gathered lotus petals to make myself a skirt.
> I will no longer care that no one understands me,
> As long as I can keep the sweet fragrance of my mind.
> Higher still the hat now that towered on my head.
> And longer the girdle that dangled from my waist.
> Fragrance and fool mingle in confusion,
> But my inner brightness has remained undimmed.

It is quite clear that those clothes of exotic styles which are made of fragrant plants are not to be understood literally; rather, they serve as symbols, suggesting the

poet's unremitting "inner brightness." Kant stated that symbols are "indirect representations modelled upon an analogy." And here we see a Chinese version of the Kantian proposition "beauty as a symbol of morality."[74]

In the text of the *Li sao*, the attention is centred on sensory quality of things which carry symbolic meanings. The sensory images make an impact upon the imagination of the reader and the reader, being stimulated, is expected to respond with his explanation of these images. Perhaps it is just in this sense that Wang Yi asserts that "the *Li sao* takes the *xing* as it is employed in the *Shi jing*." Later critics, however, prefer to use the word *bixing* to denote the *xing* of the *Li-sao* type in distinguishing from the *xing* of the *Shi-jing* type.

Wang Yi applies the *xing* to the explication of the *Li sao*. As a result, the connotations of the concept of the *xing* are broadened. Apart from the paradigm of the *Shi jin*'s use of the *xing*, we now have another paradigm of the *Li sao*, in which the *xing* is endowed with the full sense of metaphor and symbol.

2.5 The *Xing* in the *Shi Jing* Studies

Confucius considered the *xing* as one of the functions of the *Shi*. His use of the *Shi* did not seem to differ from the common practice of "quoting the *Shi* out of context to express intentions" at diplomatic meetings during the Spring and Autumn period. In both cases, verses from the *Shi* are quoted and made use of for the purpose of communication. But there is one point we cannot afford to miss. In the case of "quoting the *Shi* to express intentions," the communication is carried out in a dialogical situation and on the basis of a speaking-hearing relation; whereas in the case of Confucius's use of the *Shi*, the relation has shifted to the writing-reading pattern. In Confucius's discussion of the *Shi*, what is communicated is no longer the intention of the quoter as a speaker but the response of the quoter as a reader of a particular poetic text. Therefore in the first case to quote the *Shi* is merely a locutionary way of putting across one's thought and the *Shi jing*,

as it were, serves as a common code book. So long as both sides of the communication are familiar with the code book, no misunderstanding would occur, no matter how far-fetched the quotation might seem to be. For instance, it is recorded in the *Zuo zhuan* that in the twenty-seventh year of Duke Xiang of Lu, Duke Zheng had a banquet held in honour of a special envoy Zhao Meng at Chailong. Seven high-ranking official of Duke Zheng also attended and each of them was invited by Zhao Meng to recite a passage from the *Shi* in order that "their intentions could be observed." Zi Dashu, among others, recited poem no.94 which, in Karlgren's translation, runs as follows,

94. In the open grounds there is the creeping grass,
the falling dew is plentiful;
there is a beautiful person,
the clear forehead how beautiful!
We met carefree and happy,
and so my desire was satisfied.
In the open grounds there is the creeping grass,
the falling dew is ample;
there is a beautiful person,
how beautiful the clear forehead!
We met carefree and happy;
together with you I shall live happily.
(Karlgren, p.61)

This is obviously a love poem, probably a poem about a lovers' tryst. Yet a minister recited it at a court gathering to entertain his distinguished foreign guest. But Zhao Meng obviously appreciated it and replied, "My dear friend, it is very kind of you (to say so)." Here Du Yu, a famous annotator of the *Zuo zhuan*, notes,"(Zhao) takes just two lines 'We met carefree and happy, and so my desire is satisfied.'"[75] He is certainly right. By quoting out of context, the quoter has liberated these two lines from their original poetic aura of meaning, restored them with their capacity of ordinary speech and put them in a specific conversational situation. Then, the relation between the message and the speaker at one end of the communication chain perfectly coincides with the relation between the message and the hearer at the other. As a result, the message was smoothly and successfully carried over. In spoken discourse, as Ricoeur says, the "ability of discourse to refer

back to the speaking subject presents a character of immediacy, because the speaker belongs to the situation of interlocution.... Consequently the subjective intention of the speaker and the discourse's meaning overlap each other in such a way that it is the same thing to understand what the speaker means and what his discourse means."[76]

When we begin to examine Confucius's discussion of the *Shi* with his pupils, we immediately find that, although the communication also takes place in a dialogical situation, the aim of the dialogue is no longer to express intention, but to search for what they, as readers, can learn or what inspiration they can obtain from the poem quoted. In other words, the interest has now shifted from the speaker's message to the possible message of the poem. The relationship has become that between the written discourse and the reader. "With written discourse, however, the author's intention and the meaning of the text cease to coincide."[77] Under such circumstances the poetic text has its semantic autonomy, which "opens up the range of potential readers and, so to speak, creates the audience of the text."[78] "It is part of the meaning of a text to be open to an indefinite number of readers and, therefore, of interpretations."[79] It is perhaps in this sense that Confucius declared that "the *Shi* can inspire (*xing*, in the original)."

Moreover, Confucius's attention is usually focused on the images of the poems and his explanation of these images is metaphorical. The images inspire him, stimulate his associations and, in response, he invests them with metaphorical significance. It matters little whether these images have or do not have metaphorical meanings. He treats them as metaphors. He himself, not the author of the poem, is the metaphor maker. The poem provides him with the language material he needs in an exploration of an unknown world. It is the job of the metaphor maker to establish meaningful relations between apparently unrelated things. Metaphorical language, as Shelley writes, "marks the before unapprehended relations of things and perpetuates their apprehension,..."[80] The use of metaphor should not be looked upon simply as a rhetorical device. In fact, it is a special mode of thought, a poetic

mode of vision and utterance in contrast with the logical or discursive mode. It is also a way of acquiring knowledge. Paul Ricoeur argues that metaphor "teaches something, and so it contributes to the opening up and the discovery of a field of reality other than that which ordinary language lays bare."[81] Thus the *xing* plays a far more important role than merely that of opening a poem; instead, it opens up a field of reality. No wonder that Confucius is recorded to have warned his pupils,

> "Have you studied the 'Zhou-nan' and the 'Shao-nan' (the first two parts of the *Shi jing*) yet? A man who has not studied the 'Zhou-nan' and the 'Shao-nan' is indeed like one who stands facing the wall!"[82]

What he means to say, it seems, is that if one does not learn the *Shi* and fails to be inspired [*xing*] by it, his road to knowledge will be blocked as if there were a wall right in front of him.

In the *Mao zhuan*, the *xing* refers to the opening lines of a portion of poems in the *Shi jing*. These lines are usually descriptions of natural objects or scenes. They have the double function of starting a poem and suggesting a comparison with the human situations that follow.

After the *Mao zhuan*, Zheng Xuan followed the exegetical convention of "great significance in subtle language" passed down to him from masters of the Classics and interpreted the *Shi jing* as something like a poetic record of ancient history. For this reason he wrote the *Shi pu* 詩譜, a chronological introduction to the *Shi jing*, providing historical facts to support his commentary.

Zheng Xuan treated the *xing* as analogy, or the use of analogy to persuade, to convince or to explain. At the same time, he rid the *xing* of the function of starting a poem. To him, the analogical relationship that exists between the opening lines designated as *xing* and the rest of the poem is both enigmatic and inherent. As Zheng regarded the *xing* basically as analogy or metaphor, he expanded the application of the term to more poems which had not been tagged as *xing* by the *Mao zhuan*.

Later critics had different interpretations of the term *xing* and the meanings of the *Shi jing* poems, but Zheng Xuan's authoritative position remained unchallenged until the Song dynasty.

Zhu Xi, on various occasions, declared that the *xing* lines have no semantic connections with the rest of the poem and make no contribution to the meaning of a poem as a whole. The sole function of the *xing* is to begin a poem. He defined the *xing* as "to mention other things first in order to introduce what follows."[83] The relation between the opening lines and the rest was totally formal and could be established through the need for rhyming. Take the first stanza of poem no.21.

21.1 Minute are those little stars,
The Triad and the Quint are in the east;
hurriedly we walk in the night,
in the early morning and in the late night
we are in the palace;
truly, our lot is not the same as (hers).
(Karlgren p.12.)

Unlike Zheng Xuan who holds that there is an implied comparison between those "little stars" and the concubines ("we" in the translation), Zhu Xi looks at the first two lines as a representation of what the concubines actually see when they go to and return from the palace where they serve their lord. Those two phrases "in the east" [*zai dong*,] and "in the palace" [*zai gong*,] are selected just for the sake of rhyme.[84]

However Zhu Xi is not always consistent and his interpretations of the *Shi jing* are by no means completely free from the influence of the Han exegesis. Sometimes he holds quite a sweeping point of view and denies the *xing* any semantic connection with the theme of the whole poem. He is recorded as having said, "The *xing* in the *Shi jing* is absolutely (semantically) irrelevant. You can see it still in use in the poetry of later times. For example, 'Green green the cypress on the ridge,/ stones heaped about in mountain streams/ between heaven and earth our lives rush past,/ like travellers with a long road to go.'"[85] He asserts that the first two lines of the above poem are meaningless apart from their function of opening

the poem. But I would argue that Master Zhu may have missed the point. With the images of the cypress on the ridge and the stones in the stream, both symbols of eternity and inperishability, these lines constitute a pathetic contrast between the permanence of nature and the transitoriness of human life, which I believe is the theme of the poem.[86] None of the other examples he gives in the same passage can support his arguments. The opening lines of those poems are all meaningful rather than meaningless.

Sometimes Zhu Xi seems more willing to compromise. On one occasion, he suggests that there are two types of *xing*: one is meaningful and has semantic connections with what follows; the other is meaningless and has merely formal connections with what follows. He further subdivides the *xing* poems into two groups: poems of *bi* as well as *xing* and poems of *fu* as well as *xing*.[87] Thus we see in Zhu Xi the *xing* has been reduced to a rhetorical device.

Zhu Xi's viewpoint of the *xing* was very influential and shared by many other critics of later generations such as Yan Can (fl.1248), Xian Anshi, Xu Wei (1521-1593) of the Ming dynasty and Yao Jiheng (b.1647) of the Qing dynasty.

Xian Anshi criticized the *Mao zhuan* for being absurd in interpreting the two poems nos. 68 and 92. These two poems both start with the line "(Even) stirred waters cannot float away firewood that is bundled;" but poem no.68 vents a trooper's complaint while no.92 expresses brotherly love. Xian, therefore, argues that this proves that in a *xing* poem the first line(s) serves to open the poem only and has no additional meaning as the *Mao zhuan* asserts it does.

Psychology has revealed that it is not the object itself but man's conception of the object that evokes man's emotion. So, owing to different conceptions of the same object men may have, the same stimulus may cause different responses and similar responses may be traced to different stimuli.[88] For this reason, I think it is quite reasonable that the same *xing* images may evoke different feelings and may still be semantically related to what has been evoked. The point is, the relation does

not necessarily have to be analogical, sometimes it can also be contiguous or indexical.

Yan and Yao both subdivided the *xing* into two types. However, according to Yan, the *xing* that implies a comparison is a general rule while the *xing* without analogical meaning is exceptional.[89] According to Yao, the reverse may be right. He writes, "The *xing* means to borrow objects as a stimulus and is not necessarily related to the meaning of the poem as a whole."[90]

Xu Wei took his radical attitude from Zhu Xi and asserted that "the opening lines of the *xing* poems in the *Shi jing* are absolutely devoid of any meaning, as has been the case of the *yuefu* poems, or the Music Bureau ballads, since ancient times. *Yuefu* poems are adapted from folk ballads and are of the same type of poetry as the antique State Airs (ie. *Guofeng* of the *Shi jing*)." He further argued that all sorts of folk songs of his time were of the same nature. They were all "created spontaneously at the stimulation of objects." And the function of the *xing* lines, he continued, is "to evoke the emotions to be represented in what follows. Comprehended intuitively, they give a remarkable pleasure which cannot be explained in terms of meaning."[91]

Xu Wei's point of view was echoed four hundred years later by Gu Jiegan a scholar of our own time. Like Xu, through the study of folk songs, Gu came to the conclusion that the opening lines tagged as *xing* in the *Mao zhuan* "have no meaningful connection with what follows." He illustrated his points by citing nine folk songs which he believed are similar to the poems in the *Shi jing*. From those folk songs, he learned

> that the writer of the poem 'Guan ju' would have just intended to say 'the beautiful and good girl, she is a good mate for the lord.' Yet it would be too dull and plain; therefore he used 'Kwan-kwan (cries) the tsu-kiu bird, on the islet of the river' to make a more forceful start. The poet's emphasis is on the rhyming of 'zhou' and 'qiu'. As to the sincere love and separation of sexes bestowed upon the *tsu-kiu* bird and the harmonous and happy relation and mutual respect that are supposed to exist between the 'good girl' and the 'lord', these are all what has never occurred to the poet.[92]

Obviously, Gu attempts to approach the problem by probing into the "original intention" of the poet. But the original intention of the poet of such poems as those in the *Shi jing*, if not utterly impenetrable, is certainly unprovable. We do not even have the faintest idea of who most of those poets are. As has been argued, the concept of *xing* in the *Mao zhuan-Zheng jian* system does not belong to poetics, but to hermeneutics. The "original intention" does not necessarily justify or disprove an interpretation. Moreover, his method of quoting folk songs of not very good quality as illustration is equally problematic. For one thing, some of the folk songs he has quoted show that the opening lines do have some meaningful relation with the rest of the poem. For another, as Xu Fuguan pointed out, "Poems can be good or poor.... The use of *xing* can also be good or poor. Just as we cannot judge the nature of poetry by doggerels or versified medical formulas which may sound like poetry but have no poetic quality at all, we cannot define the *xing* in accordance with those folk songs in which the use of the *xing* does not measure up to the requirements of the *xing*."[93] Though Xu's arguments may be suspected of having been lost in the hermeneutical circle, I believe those scholars who attempt to prove that the *xing* is merely the meaningless opening of a poem by quoting such jingles as "One two three four, we don't want the war! Five six seven eight, we don't want the state!"[94] are perhaps farther off the truth.

Scholars of this century who hold that the *xing* lines play a semantic role conceive the *xing* either as symbols or stock phrases. Wen Yiduo, who benefited a great deal from James Frazer's influential book *The Golden Bough*, was a pathfinder in the study of the *Shi jing* from a sociological perspective. Using his knowledge of anthropology, he made a thorough study of a number of *xing* images in the *Shi jing* as well as other poems and found that they have deep-rooted symbolic meanings. He said,

> "*Xiang* [images] and *xing* are actually both *yin* (the concealed, or enigma), which means to express what needs expressing enigmatically. ... Critics of later generations have also called the *xing* in poetry as 'xing xiang', which belongs to the same category as

> what Westerners would call image and symbol. Yet to use a Chinese term, they are all *yin*.[95]

He has suggested that in Chinese poetry the image of fish often serves as a symbol of love and sex. To catch fish or to eat fish alludes to paired joy or conjugal relations. To employ the image of fish or fishing as *xing* in poetry suggests sexual love, sexual fulfillment or frustration and, by way of an erotico-political transformation, may symbolize the relationship between the ruler and his ministers. The reason for using fish images, he points out in the same essay, lies in the primitive belief that fish is an animal of great fecundity.

Zhao Peiling has found that the birds, beasts and plants used in the *Shi jing* as *xing* are not simply figures of speech, but have their own solemn, religious significance. They are related to a specific mythology of clan society and antique *wu* shamanistic history. Between what Zhu Xi says "the other things" and "what follows," there exists "a relationship based on certain mysterious religious concepts."[96] This is another attempt to interpret the *Shi jing* in the Frazer-Wen tradition.

Through a detailed study of the history of the word *xing*, Chow Tse-tsung has discovered that the *xing* in the Zhou dynasty referred to a kind of poetry to be recited at a ceremony in which concrete objects were displayed for the purpose of celebration or commemoration. He suggests that the later meaning "allusive" for the term *xing* must have derived from certain rituals as a result of the relation between concrete objects and the possessor or user of these objects. His study of ancient Chinese customs through an etymological investigation of a number of words, such as *lu* [shoe], *ma* [hemp], *shuan* [frost] and *lu* [dew], has revealed that those allegedly nonsensical images of nature objects which repeatedly appear in the *Shi jing* actually have symbolic implications and a semantic relationship exists between the *xing* lines and the rest of the poem as the Han annotators claimed.[97]

However the nature object, after long and repeated use as a *xing* element, may lose its freshness and symbolic import and fade into a meaningless stock

phrase. Marce Granet has noted that natural images employed as *xing* are "formulae to be introduced ready-made into the songs. They constitute a sort of stereotyped landscape, and if they are connected with the sentiments expressed, it is not for the purpose of particularizing them, but rather... to connect them with general customs."[98]

It is in this sense that Shi-hsiang Chen maintains that "the *hsing* [*xing*] elements deserve the name, in the modern formal sense, of 'motif' to the Songs (the *Shi jing* poems)."[99] Peter Lee also describes the *xing* as "the thematic introduction of nature scenes to state the motif of the poem."[100]

C. H. Wang introduced the Parry-Lord "oral-formulaic theory" into the study of the *Shi jing*. He came to the conclusion,

> Often a *Shi jing* theme is heralded by some reference to natural objects which in various evocative forms prepare for the fixed realization of the content. The reference to natural objects intensifies the poem by association and reminiscence which the audience can be counted on to recognize.[101]

What he calls here reference to natural objects is actually nature images which he labels as "type-scenes" or "stereotyped formula."

The oral-formulaic theory reveals the way in which the oral poet makes use of traditional patterns to express his individual and original thoughts. This theory gives new and stimulating insights to the study of the *Shi jing*. It enables us to explain why a considerable number of nature images have appeared and re-appeared in different poems of the *Shi jing*. But there are also drawbacks and difficulties. First, the validity of the oral-formulaic theory in literary criticism is questionable. As Ruth Fennegan has said, "to name certain repeated patterns of words, sounds or meanings as 'formulae' does not really add to our understanding of the style or process of composition in a given piece."[102] Second, the applicability of this theory to the study of the *Shi jing* seems more problematic. Unlike the Homeric or Yugoslav epics through the study of which Parry and Lord established their theories, the poetry of the *Shi jing*, strictly speaking, might not be able to be

properly considered as oral poetry. Qu Wanli, for example, has proved that the extant *Shi jing* contains folk songs which were considerably revised and polished by collectors and editors to suit the taste of high society and to be set to music.[103] A strong proof is that the use of rhyme in the *Shi jing* is very consistent, a fact which indicates that the editors might have used a standard language instead of various dialects in which the original folk songs of fifteen different states were supposed to be composed.[104]

The anthropological study conducted by Wen Yiduo may be able to reveal the underlying symbolic meanings of some seemingly innocent *xing* images. However, symbols can be universal, conventional or personal. What the anthropological approach can explain are mainly those universal symbols which are rooted in the common experience of human beings or conventional symbols which arise from a particular cultural environment. It would not be as effective when personal or accidental symbols, which are related to the poet's personal experience, are to be considered. Moreover, in most cases, poets use symbols unconsciously and do not necessarily have a sound knowledge of anthropology which underlies the meaning of the symbols. Symbolism is generally closely linked with unconsciousness just as mythology is linked with collective unconsciousness. Herbert Read, for example, has spoken of modern man in the act of art as awaiting "some symbol rising unaided from the depths of his unconscious."[105]

Here the debate is centred on two interrelated questions: a. Does the imagery in the *xing* lines simply open a poem, signifying nothing? b. How should we consider the relationship between the *xing* lines and the rest of the poem?

The first question does not seem to me to constitute an issue. To speak always means something. It is self-evident that in poetry every word counts. If there is no surface meaning apparent there may well be concealed meaning. If the *xing* lines do not tell the reader what they mean explicitly, the reader has to explain what they show and try to find ways to confer on them significance and importance. "Poetry succeeds because all or most of what is said or implied is relevant; what is

irrelevant has been excluded like lumps from pudding and 'bugs' from machinery!"[106]

As to the relation between the *xing* lines and the rest of the poem, I believe the problem of interpretation does not result from dissatisfaction with the language or the writer, but that of the reader. The *xing* lines are related to the rest of the poem both formally and semantically, first and foremost, because they are a part and parcel of a piece of discourse. In a poetic discourse, the coherence is taken for granted by the reader. Therefore, the *xing* lines have to be taken as relevant to other parts of the poem. Michael Stubbs writes, "Whatever two utterances occur next to one another, hearers will attempt to relate them: to use the first as a discourse frame for the second."[107] This theory applies to the written text as well. In a written text, the foregoing sentences, especially the ones immediately preceding, provide a kind of pretext framework or context within which the sentences that follow are to be interpreted. The reader may take for granted the understanding of successive sentences coherently. It is the adjacent position of the two parts of the *xing* poem that guarantees the tie of cohesion. Then, in a *xing* poem, as we have seen, the apparently unrelated two parts are as a rule knitted tightly together by rhymes. This fact forces the reader to take them as a whole in his consideration of the meanings of the poem. The gap of the apparent irrelevance that exists between these two parts has to be filled by the reader who has been stimulated and evoked by the impact made upon his imagination by those sensory images. This act of filling in missing information is comparable to "a process people go through when attempting to reach an interpretation of what they hear, or to get from what the literal meaning of what is said to what the speaker intends to convey."[108]

On the other hand, as Stubbs has noted, "interpretations may operate backwards: we look backwards in discourse to discover the relevance of an utterance to its predecessors, especially if a mismatch is evident."[109] He provides us with an interesting example of adult-child interaction:

Child: chocolate.
Mother: no, Mummy says you can't have any chocolate.

By merely looking at what the child has said, we are not clear about his intention; but the mother's utterance explains it all: the child wants to eat chocolate. We can easily come to the conclusion because we take it for granted that the second utterance is a response to the first. That is exactly what happens in *Mao zhuan-Zheng jian*'s interpretation of the *Shi jing* poems. Let us look once more at the first stanza of poem no.1,

1.1 Kwan-kwan (cries) the tsu-kiu bird,
on the islet of the river;
the beautiful and good girl,
she is a good mate for the lord.

The relation between the first two lines designated as the *xing* and the rest is not clear, but the meanings of the latter half are clear enough: they express a wish for an ideal conjugal relationship. If those Confucian scholars who looked upon the *Shi jing* as a record of the earliest history wanted to relate "lord" to the great King Wen and the "good girl" to his virtuous wife, they had every reason to do so. Having determined the meanings of the second two lines, they would not hesitate to explain that the crying tsu-kiu bird symbolizes that ideal relationship and the bird must have a special virtue to evoke such a symbolic meaning. Hence, they must have the quality of being able to observe the separation of sexes and to live in seclusion as it was believed that King Wen's wife had or was supposed to have as a wise king's consort. The next step, through a erotico-political transformation, is to interpret the relationship as the ideal relationship between the ruler and his ministers. This is the secret of the Mao-Zheng's interpretation of the *Shi jing*.

Such an interpretation needs two prerequisites: the juxtaposition of the natural and human worlds and the underlying philosophy of the "unity of Man and Nature." The stark juxtaposition challenges the reader's mind to find out the relation. The idea of the "unity of Man and Nature" makes it inevitable to invest the natural objects with human significance.

To conclude this section, the *xing* of the *Shi jing* type is, as a rule, a few images of objects, usually nature objects or a shorthand of a nature scene, which serve the purpose of or have the function of opening a poem and introducing what follows - usually a human situation. Its efficacy comes from being a representation of sensation which arises as a response of the human mind to external stimula. Its function, however, is by no means purely formal but semantic as well; that is to say, its relation with the rest of the poem is not merely a structural necessity, but also a meaningful requirement.

According to the relations between the *xing* lines and the rest of the poem, the *xing* poem of the *Shi jing* type can be further grouped under three categories. First, there are those in which the relation is based on semantic similarity; for example, poem no.1, in which the "ts'u-kiu bird" and the "good girl" share the similarity that they both observe the separation of sexes. Second, there are those in which the relation is based on semantic contiguity, for example, poem no.124,

124.1 The ko creepers grow and cover the thorns,
the lien creepers spread to the uncultivated tracts;
my beautiful one has gone away from here;
with whom can I associate - alone I dwell.
(Karlgren, pp.79-80.)

The creeping plants are reminders of the "beautiful one," because he/she "has gone away (died/left)" from here, and not because there are any similarities between the plants and the "beautiful one." The third stanza of this poem serves an even better purpose:

124.3 The horn pillow is beautiful,
the brocade coverlet is bright;
my beautiful one has gone away from here;
with whom can I associate - alone I have my morning.
(Karlgren, p.80.)

Obviously the relation of the "horn pillow" and the "beautiful one" is one of contiguity rather than similarity. In the third category, we have those *xing* poems in which the *xing* lines (the opening lines) serve not as a reminder, nor a comparison, but as a setting or a background in or against which human activities are presented. They contribute to the creation of an atmosphere which is in harmony with the overall aura of the poem and is also in keeping with the speaker's emotions. Take poem no.129,

129.1 The reeds and rushes are very green,
the white dew becomes hoar-frost;
he whom I call "that man" is somewhere near the stream;
I go up the stream after him,
the road is difficult and long;
I go down the stream after him,
but he eludes me (by going) into the midst of the stream.
(Karlgren, p.83.)

This is perhaps one of the most sophisticated symbolic poems available in the *Shi jing*. Karlgren explains its theme is "A girl is out in the open, hoping for a love-meeting with her beau, whom she dare not even mention by name, but he eludes her." But this perhaps should be taken as one of the interpretations and seems to be too literal. The whole situation is actually so nebulous that it is even impossible to tell with any certainty the sex of the so-called "yi-ren" ("that man" in Karlgren's translation) and therefore is impossible to say whether the speaker is a girl or not and whether it is a love-meeting that is sought after. Yet what we do know is that the first two lines - a pretty description of an autumnal scene near a water margin - prepare the atmosphere for the whole poem and effect with strong symbolic overtone; for both dew and frost have sexual connotations in Chinese poetry.[110]

In the first group of the *xing* poems, the *xing* lines may be called symbolic in the traditional sense. As to the second group, we may borrow C.S.Peirce and say that the relationship between the *xing* images and the meanings is indexical. Just as a knock on the door is an index of someone's presence, the sight of the creeping

plants or a horn pillow is an index of the absence of the "beautiful one."[111] In the third group, the *xing* lines serve as a setting for the whole poem. In such cases, we may call them "properties" as Louis MacNeice would put it.[112]

3. The Six Dynasties

The disintegration of the Han empire greatly weakened the communal consciousness which the Han rulers had carefully and energetically cultivated. At the same time, a spirit of individualism was emerging which finally brought about a revolution in Chinese attitudes toward literature and poetry. The Six Dynasties (220-580) that followed the Han saw "the self-consciousness of literature." This is a historical period abundant in innovations. It experienced the ripening of the five-word poetry, the growth of genre studies, the invention and flourishing of court poetry, the formation of the sound system of poetry as a result of the introduction of the *si sheng* or the four tones into Chinese prosody, and the first appearance and maturing of landscape poetry in world history as an artistic creation. In literary criticism, it witnessed a shift of standpoint from hermeneutics to poetics, a shift of attitudes from the dominantly didactic and utilitarian to the aesthetic and a shift of interest from politics and ethics to the emotional quality in poetry. This can be seen most clearly in the first anthology of literary writings which was compiled and published with the sponsorship of a crown prince, under the principle that the works reflected must be excellent in their literary values. For the first time in Chinese literary history scholars began to study literature as literature, not as something appended to politics or ethics. Therefore, they turned their attention to the aesthetic values of literary writings, to the study of literary forms which, among others, included the imagery and musicality of poetry. Of all things that sprung up during this period, the arising of the five-word poetry and nature poetry, as well as the shift of emphasis from the didactic element to the emotional and aesthetic element made a direct impact on the development of the theory of the *xing*.

The five-word poetry emerged as a new poetic genre after the separation of words and music in poetry took place. As poets began consciously to add musical quality to bare words and apply the principles of prosody to their creation, the five-word poetry gradually attained a complete art-form which was to be appreciated alone without the aid of music and which was able to express both emotion and idea, two different functions which had been performed separately by music and words when poetry was enjoyed with musical accompaniment. Compared with the previous four-word poetry, the five-word had a larger capacity and flexibility which enabled the poet to write flowing descriptive passages. At the same time, a new interest in Taoist philosophy helped to bring about a new feeling for nature among the literati, who began to find in the "mountains and waters" the sustenance for emotion and the embodiment for Taoist philosophical ideas. Hence the appearance of Nature poetry.

Based on their observations of the newly-arising five-word poetry which also marked the revival of Chinese lyrical tradition, critics began to put the study of the *xing* in a new perspective: to examine its function in terms of the interaction between the external and internal worlds, and to inquire into the issues of how the nature object affects the poet's creation and how the poet expresses or manifests his emotions and thoughts through the presentation, or rather the representation, of natural landscape. The most important essays in literary criticism of this period include the *Wen fu* by Lu Ji, the *Wen xin diao long* by Liu Xie, and the *Shi pin* by Zhong Rong.

3.1 Lu Ji

The *Record of Music* [*Yue ji*], which forms Chapter XVII of the *Book of Rites* [*Li ji*], provides us with a theory of the origin of music:

> The production of all musical sounds (of man) comes forth from the human mind. The movements of the human mind are activated by

> external things. Being acted upon by external things, it moves, and this movement finds physical embodiment in sound.[1]

The *Record of Music*, according to the *Han shu* or the *History of the Han Dynasty*, was compiled during the reign of Emperor Wu of the Han dynasty (140-86 BC) Apparently, its theory was greatly influenced by the then dominant philosophy represented by Dong Zhongshu and his *Chunqiu fan lu*, or the *Luxuriant Dews of the Annals of Spring and Autumn*, especially the cosmological theories of *tian ren he yi* , or "the unity of Nature and Man" and *tian ren gan yin,* or "the Nature and Man stimulating and responding to each other." Dong says,

> When Heaven is about to make the *yin* rain down, men fall sick; that is, there is a movement prior to the actual event. It is the *yin* beginning its complementary response [*hsiang yin*] Heaven has the *yin* and the *yang*, and so has man. When the *yin chhi* (lit. breath, meaning basic force) of Heaven and Earth begins (to dominate), the *yin chhi* of man responds by taking the lead also. Or if the yin chhi of the man begins to advance, the *yin chhi* of Heaven and Earth must by rights respond to it by rising also. Their Tao is one.[2]

During the Six Dynasties, the concepts of stimulus [*gan*] and response [*yin*] remains a basic theory. In the *Shi shuo xin yu*, we read:

> Mr Yin, a native of Jinzhou, once asked a (Taoist) monk, Zhang Yeyuan, "What is really the essence [ti] of the *Yi jing*, (or *I-Ching*, the *Book of Changes*)?" The latter answered, "The essence of the *Yi jing* can be expressed in one single word: *gan*.[3]

Lu Ji (261-303 A.D.) is perhaps the first person who applies the stimulus-response theory to the interpretation of the beginning of literary creation. In the *Wen fu*, he writes,

2. Moving along with the four seasons,
he (the writer) sighs at the passing of time;
gazing at the myriad objects,
he thinks of the complexity of the world.

3. He sorrows over the falling leaves in virile autumn;
he takes joy in the delicate bud of fragrant spring.

4. With awe at heart, he experiences chill;
his spirit solemn, he turns his gaze to the clouds.[4]

The "external world" described here refers to natural objects or scenes only. This is in line with the tradition starting with the *Shi jing*. According to Lu Ji, under the influence of the external world, i.e. the natural objects or scenes which change with the seasons, the writer's emotions arise. Possessed by the emotions, the writer turns towards the inside and contemplates the philosophy of life which, in Lu Ji's case, has been concretised into thought of the transience of human life embodied in the awareness of the "passing of time." All these points have been proved essential in Chinese poetry. The feeling of the transitoriness of human life, also one of the central topics in Shakespeare's sonnets, has been one of the major themes of Chinese poetry since the *Nineteen Ancient Poems* [*Gushi shijiu shou*]. And this theme is conventionally represented through or with the help of the description of a changing or a changed landscape. In the *Nineteen Ancient Poems*, we read these lines,

> In the four directions, broad plain on plain;
> east wind shakes the hundred grasses.
> Among all I meet, nothing of the past;
> what can save us from sudden old age?[5]

Though Lu Ji did not use the term *xing*, his description of the beginning of a creative process is a typical case of *chu wu xing gan*, or "the sight of an object evokes emotions." Towards the end of the *Wen fu*, Lu Ji further discusses the *xing* without using the term. He writes,

> 111. As for the interaction of stimulus and response,
> and the principle of the flowing and ebbing of inspiration,
> You cannot hinder its coming or stop its going.
> It vanishes like a shadow, and it comes like echoes.
> (Fang, p.544)

It must be pointed out here that the original lines are just a few verbal phrases without grammatical subjects. Such pronouns as "you" and "it" are added by the translator. We may infer that the grammatical subject is something that arises at the "interaction of stimulus and response" and that opens a blocked creative mind. When it comes, it cannot be held back. Here Lu Ji gives a vivid description

of the *xing* in the sense of a certain state of mind of the writer but fails to name it. However, in distitch no.79, he does mention a special type of *xing* which he calls *gu xing*, or "solitary *xing*" and which, he says, arises when one lives in a desert.

Lu Ji's concept of the *xing* is in line with the general understanding of the word in the Jing dynasty. Examples can be found in the *Shi shuo xin yu*. The story of Wang Ziqiu's visit to a famous hermit on a snowy night is a well-known one. It is said that Wang, excited by the beautiful snow, decided to pay a visit to the hermit by boat. When he arrived at the place where the hermit lived, he did not enter and meet him; instead, he turned back right away. When asked the reason, he answered, "I set out on an impulse (*xing*, in the original). When the impulse was gone, I returned. Why must I see him?"[6]

This usage of the word *xing* is accepted and followed by later poets and critics. Zhi Yu (?-311 A.D.) of the Jin dynasty defines the *xing* as "words (ci 辭) engendered by stimulus."[7] The *Xing* in this sense is also seen in many poems written by such great Tang poets as Li Bai and Du Fu. Li Bai writes,

> Last night Wu was shrouded in snow,
> Ziqiu's lofty *xing* arose.[8]

These are two lines alluding to the anecdote we have just quoted. And

> I feel the autumn *xing* is carefree,
> Who says the autumn *xing* is sad?[9]

> People are separated thousands of miles apart,
> My *xing* is submerged in the goblet (of wine).[10]

> All cherish lofty *xing* and think of a long flight,
> Aspiring for the blue sky to embrace the bright moon.[11]

And Du Fu writes,

> Greatly depressed I try to dispel the *xing* by writing verses,
> When a poem is composed, my chanting turns plaintive.[12]

> My *xing* meets mist and clouds,
> Fortunately, the goblet is not empty.[13]

> My poetry has exhausted the *xing* in this human world,
> And I have to look for it down in the deep sea.[14]

> I have loved the exotic and antique all my life,

Facing it my *xing* is associated with the spirits.[15]

To make the point clear, I have left all the *xing*s in the above lines untranslated. Different English words may be used to fit different contexts. However, these *xings* invariably mean an elevated feeling arising from human encounter with the outside world, which in the case of a poet like Li Bai or Du Fu tends to turn into lyrical impulse, urging him to give it a poetic form. Chinese critics and poets have attached great importance to the *xing* of this sense. Li Qi, a critic of the Song dynasty, says, "Since ancient times *xing* has never been absent from those who are well versed in poetry. When seeing an object and evoked by it, one will have *xing*."[16] Yang Wanli, another critic and a poet of the Song dynasty, says:

> Generally speaking, to compose poetry, it is best to start with the *xing*. If one has to make a poem with a title designated for him, the effect would not be as good. If one has to write a poem using the rhyme of somebody else's poem, he is just doing his duty. At first, one may have no intention of composing a poem. It is only an object or an event that has happened to stimulate him and, all of a sudden, his feelings are moved by the object or the event. Stimulus comes first and is followed by response; then, a poem is brought into being. What has the poet done? It is all Heaven (that has done it.) This is called *xing*.[17]

Yang's remarks remind us of what Robert Burns has said in this respect, "I have two or three times in my life composed from the wish rather than the impulse, but I never succeeded to any purpose."[18]

In the above quoted translation from Lu Ji's *Wen fu*, the word "inspiration" is used. James Liu also uses the word "inspiration" in his translation of this passage from Lu Ji. He does not give any explanation, because, he argues, "this eloquent passage speaks for itself and hardly needs exegesis."[19] Obviously he equates Lu Ji's concepts of stimulus-response with the Western concept of inspiration. This equation and translation, however, are problematic. We need to compare and distinguish the Chinese concept of the *xing* appearing in the present context and the Western concept of inspiration.

In the West, there are basically two theories of poetic inspiration. The first maintains that inspiration comes from outside the poet and the second maintains that it comes from within the poet. The first theory, starting with Democritus and Plato, suggests that inspiration comes from the gods or God and is therefore divine. The second theory, a relatively modern one, holds that inspiration either comes from the poet's genius as held by the Romanticists or, as held by the surrealists, arises from the poet's observations of his own suppressed desire as well as his observation of conflicts in society and the economic and political conditions against which the poet rebels. The Chinese concept of *xing* in this context, as we have seen in the *Wen fu*, refers to a sort of lyrical impulse or sentiment, which arises from the interaction of the external and internal. It is close to the Coleridgean metaphor of the Eolian harp which being played on by the wind makes music without intervention of art.[13] It comes from neither totally outside the poet, nor totally within the poet. It has little to do with gods and is not divine. Neither does it have much to do with the poet's genius. It may have something to do with studied observations of the poet himself or of the society; however, it comes chiefly from intuition. Yang Wanli, in the above-quoted passage, does attribute the genesis of poetry to Heaven. However, one must bear in mind that, in the Chinese tradition at this time in Yang's passage, Heaven, in most cases, refers to the Nature that activates human mind, rather than any supernatural power. Therefore, the *xing* is a different concept than the Western concept of inspiration in general.

If we are to find some theory in the Western tradition that comes any closer to the Chinese concept of *xing* in the present context, we may find it in Paul Valéry's theory of inspiration. According to W. N. Ince, for Valéry, the word inspiration can mean any one of six things, which Ince labels as 1. "total inspiration," which has much to do with supernatural power; 2. "intermittent inspiration," which refers to a poetic state or poetic emotion; 3. "intuitive inspiration," which is closely connected with the "intermittent inspiration" and is chiefly an illumination; 4. "exalted inspiration," which refers to a state of

exaltation, in which "the poet feels a supreme assurance in his power;" 5. "attributed inspiration," which involves a "value-judgement by the reader who uses the word to describe that state which the poet must, he thinks, have experienced to write such good poetry;" and 6. personal inspiration," which means an "inspiring principle - the themes, emotions and tones peculiar to poet, the personal something which distinguishes him from other man."[20] Of all these six meanings of the word inspiration as Valéry uses it, meanings nos. 2, 3 and 4 are quite comparable to the Chinese concept of *xing* in our present discussion.

The third meaning, which Ince labels as "intuitive inspiration," is a "flash of insight." When it visits a person, it "suddenly gives rise to a *trouvaille* which he will be able to profit by for the purpose of composing a poem." There are two forms of illumination. One "makes the poet write a poem, or think about starting to write a poem;" the other "occurs during actual composition."[21] Inspiration in this sense is very close to the *xing* in the sense of *dun wu* 頓悟 , or "instantaneous illumination."

The fourth meaning of Valéry's inspiration, which Ince labels as "exalted inspiration," is also shared by Chinese critics and poets. Lu Ji speaks of a particular state of mind in which the poet can write with great easy.

> 114. When the heavenly Arrow is at its fleetest and sharpest,
> What confusion is there that cannot be brought to order?
>
> 115. The wind of thought busts from the heart;
> The stream of words rushes through the lips and teeth.
>
> 116. Luxuriance and magnificence wait the command of the brush and the paper.[22]

The "Heavenly Arrow" is by no means controlled and shot by God, but is to be triggered by the interaction of external stimuli and the writer's responses. Inspiration in this sense is also comparable to Li Bai and Du Fu's use of the word *xing* in their poetic works. Du Fu frequently declares in his poems that, when composing a poem, he feels as if he were possessed by a supernatural power [*shen* 神].

However, it is the second meaning "intermittent inspiration" that comes closest to the Chinese concept of *xing* as we have considered it in this chapter. There are quite a few similarities between the two. First, "intermittent inspiration" is a state which Valéry calls *état poétique*. It is entirely independent of all works defined and it results naturally and spontaneously in a certain harmony between our intimate disposition (temperament), physical or psychic, and the circumstances (real or imaginary) which impress us.[23] When Lu Ji writes "Moving along with the four seasons, he sighs at the passing of time; gazing at the myriad objects, he thinks of the complexity of the world," he is describing an *état poétique* which results naturally in a certain harmony between the poet's temperament and the circumstances that activate him.

Secondly, this *état poétique*, according to Valéry, is not confined to the poet and does not necessarily find expression in a poem, or even in words. Ince has noted,

> In fact, Valéry conceives the state as the essential experience which all the arts, - poetry, music, painting and architecture - derive from and seek to recreate in their various ways for those to whom they are addressed.[24]

It should be noted here that, before Valéry, Hegel had described inspiration as a "natural impulse," and an "immediate need" to give forms to everything that an artist feels and imagines. He further pointed out that "inspiration can be produced primarily through *sensuous stimulus*. "[25] Similar to the concept of inspiration as expounded by Hegel and Valéry, the *xing* is not confined to the poet and poetic creation either. Wang Ziqiu's urge to visit a hermit on a snowy night does not involve any form of art; yet it is considered highly aesthetic and as a typical case of the *xing*. Men of letters have ever since taken great delight in talking about it. Both Li Bai and Du Fu have poems alluding to this story. It is the combination of the beauty of the external world (snow scene) and the beauty of the internal world (the thought of visiting a hermit who, at that time, was considered noble morally) that arouses the interest of poets and artists.

The concept of *xing* is also employed in the Chinese arts of painting and calligraphy. Cai Xizhong wrote, "the (writing) brush was wielded only when *xing* had been aroused."[26] Zhang Huihuan remarked, "Just observe the calligraphical works he has left behind,... the profundity of the pleasure they evoke and the emotions they may arouse [*bixing*] cannot be conveyed in words; but can only be comprehended through contemplation."[27]

Thirdly, the *xing*, like "intermittent inspiration," is a "certain genre d'émotion." There are all kinds of *xing* in accordance with various situations in which the *xing* is evoked. Lu Ji speaks of *gu xing*, or "solitary *xing*." Li Bai mentions *qiu xing*, a *xing* aroused by autumnal scenes, *gao xing*, or "lofty *xing*," and *yi xing*, or "carefree *xing*." Both Bai Juyi and Liu Yuxi wrote poems with the general title *zha xing*, or "miscellaneous *xing*."

In Lu Ji's *Wen fu*, the *xing* means a lyrical impulse in literary creation, which is evoked as a result of responses of the creative subject to the stimuli acting upon him by the natural object. Archibald MacLeish has put it very well that "To Lu Ji the beggeting of a poem involves not a single electric pole thrust deep into the acids of the self but a pair of poles - a man and the world opposite."[28]

The *xing*, therefore, should not be understood, as inspiration usually is, as a gift from God. It is the spark flashing between the poles of the perceiving subject and the perceived object. It is the quivering of the string of an Eolian harp played on by the wind of Nature.

3.2 Liu Xie

Like Lu Ji, Liu Xie (466? - 532?) attributes the exciting cause of literary creation to the interaction between the external world and the internal world. He writes,

> Man is endowed with seven emotions. When stimulated by external objects, these emotions rise in response. In responding to objects one sings to express his sentiments.[29]

Liu Xie applies the Han Confucian theory of *yin* and *yang* to the interpretation of the interaction between Nature and man:

> Spring and autumn roll around, succeeding one another, and the *yin* and *yang* principles alternately darken and brighten. When objects in the physical world change, our minds are also affected. When the *yang* principle begins to ascend, ants burrow, and when the *yin* principle congeals the mantis begins to feed. Insignificant as these insects are, even they are affected. Profoundly indeed are things moved by the four seasons. Excellent jade inspires the mind of the intelligent, and glorious flowers shower splendor upon the soul that is pure. All things exert influence on one another. Who is there that can rest unmoved? At the stimulation or influence, or the call of things.[30]

Under the omnipresent influence of Nature, man's heart stirs and his feelings change with the season.

> Thus, as the new year is rung in and the spring begins to burgeon, we experience a joyous mood; as the luxuriant summer rolls by, our minds become filled with happy thoughts; as the sky heightens and the air becomes clear and brisk, our hearts become darkened and heavy with distant thoughts; and when the ground is covered by boundless sleet and snow, our souls become burdened with serious and profound reflections.[31]

The stimuli of the natural phenomena arouse in the human mind an impulse to express itself.

> Mountains rise one behind another, and waters meander and circle;
> Trees interlace and clouds mingle.
> Such sights before the eyes
> Stir the mind to express itself.[32]

This is what Liu Xie calls "the sight of objects excites (*xing* in the original) emotions"[33]. The *xing* of this nature accounts for the genesis of literary creation, but not the literary creation itself. In this sense, all literary writings, especially poetry which is worthy of the name, may be ascribed to the *xing*.

Paul Valéry in his "Remarks on Poetry" discusses the two meanings of the word 'poetry'. He says, "It designates, first of all, a certain kind of emotion, a particular emotive state, which can be aroused by extremely diverse objects or

circumstances." In its second sense, Valéry continues, poetry "makes us think of an art, of a strange activity whose aim is to reconstruct the emotion defined by the first meaning of the word."[34]

The *xing* as Liu Xie uses the word also has two meanings or two different functions. Its first meaning - as an exciting cause of literary creation, as we have shown above - operates within the scope of the first meaning of the word 'poetry' as expounded by Valéry. The second meaning of the *xing* which denotes an artistic activity in the process of literary creation is explained by Liu Xie in the chapter entitled "Bi xing."

> Broad and profound are the poems of the *Shi jing*, which embrace the Six Principles [the *Liuyi*]. Master Mao in his commentary on the *Shi jing*, however, labels the poems of the *xing* type only. Is this because the *feng* (as a principle) is embodied in all (poems *of* the *Shi jing*), the *fu* (as a principle) is identical (with the *fu* as a type of poetry), and the *bi* is obvious, whereas the *xing* is obscure? The *bi* means 'to adhere'; the *xing* means 'to evoke'. To attach a thought (to a poem), one alludes to a situation in accordance with appropriate category; to evoke emotion one expresses his intentions through insignificant things. To evoke emotion, the mode of the *xing* is set up. To attach thought (to a poem), the mode of the *bi* is created. In the *bi*, one castigates out of accumulated indignation. In the *xing*, one communicates admonition by means of clusters of analogies. Since situations may vary with time, the poets (of the *Shi jing*) have two different ways of expressing their intentions.[35]

Here Liu discusses the *bi* and the *xing* in the tradition of the Six Principles. He may seem to have simply amalgamated both the definitions given by the Han scholars Zhen Zhong and Zhen Xuan, as Fan Wenlan has noted;[36] however, his own contribution to the study of *bixing* is by no means negligible, but of tremendous new value.

One would first be impressed by his emphasis on the evocation of emotion. What Liu means by the evocation of emotion in this context, however, is neither the arousal of emotion on the part of the reader at the stimulus of the literary work, especially its imagery, nor the arousal of emotion on the part of the poet at the stimulus of the external object which sends him into a state of poetic creation. Rather the arousal of emotion in this context implies the exploration, clarification

and concretization of the poet's emotions and ideas in the process of literary creation. According to Liu Xie, when confronted with the natural world, "one's eyes roll while one's heart emits and admits;" "emotion goes away like a present and *xing* comes back like a requital."[37] When the poet observes the object with emotion, what he receives in return is not simply a poetic impulse but rather poetic expression, as he says, "when the object is envisaged (by the poet) with emotion, the wording (of the work) will certainly be ingenious and beautiful."[38] It is through the continuous interaction between the inner and outer worlds, the stimulating objects and the contemplating mind, that the poet's emotion becomes more and more tangible and his sensation is transformed into expression which consists, mainly, of rhythm and the evocative imagery. Thus Liu Xie concludes his chapter entitled "Shen si" with these lines:

> The working of the spirit strings together images,
> Which are conceived through the manipulation of emotion/situation.
> Things excite (man) by their appearance;
> And (man's) heart responds with reason.
> Rhythm is fastidiously considered,
> And *bi xing* germinated.
> With the operation of mind in command,
> The battle is won with the curtains let down.

The last two lines allude to a famous Chinese general who is said to have been able to "make strategies in a tent and win the battle which is going on a thousand miles away."[39] The story is used here as a metaphor of literary conception. In conceiving a poetic piece, according to Liu Xie, there are two things which are of primary importance - rhythm or metre and imagery. They can be constructed only through the interaction between "heart" and "things." The poet has to live and relive his experience of existence outside himself before his emotion finally becomes one with the objects envisaged and contemplated, and it is in this process that the *bixing*, i.e. metaphorical or evocative imagery, is "germinated." In lyric, Hegel says, "it is feeling and reflection which ... draw the objectively existent world into themselves and live it through in their own inner element, and only then, after that world has become something inward, is it grasped and expressed in words."[40] With these

words in mind, we shall perhaps have a better understanding of the following lines with which Liu Xie concludes the chapter "*Bi- xing*":

> The *bixing* of the Ancient Poets is worked out,
> As a result of their contacts with and all-round observation of things.
> Things which are as disparate as Hu (in the North) and Yue (in the South),
> When brought together can be (as close and compatible) as the liver and the gall.
> Describing the appearance and taking the heart (of things),
> One must be resolute in the forging of language.
> Massing miscellaneous things, one composes songs and poems,
> Which are as lively and vigorous as the flowing of a stream.[41]

The transformation from sensation to expression is the process of objectification of the poet's feelings and ideas. It is during the process that *bi* and *xing* are "germinated." The growth of *bi* and *xing*, to continue with Liu Xie's metaphor, must have the poet's observation of the object as its prerequisite. Only through comprehensive observations can the poet have an intimate knowledge of the observable properties of the object. A poet must first observe accurately before he can possibly represent accurately. On the other hand, a good knowledge of the object makes it possible for the poet to form a concept of it and derive from it the significance. Thus Liu Xie praises the excellent description of the material world in the poems of the *Shi jing*, saying "though a thousand years have passed, still no one can think of a better version to describe (these natural phenomena)."[42]

However, accurate and vivid description of the object is just half of the work. Liu Xie maintains that, in conceiving a literary piece, the poet should "cruise with the object" and, at the same time, "roam with the heart." This is to say that the poet must not only linger over what is external but also brood over what is internal. And Liu Xie creates the phrase "ni rong qu xin" (literally, to imitate the appearance and take the heart) to describe the poet's dual task.

Although this phrase seems simple and clear enough, its interpretation has been very controversial.[43] The fundamental difference lies in the understanding of the "bi xing" as Liu Xie uses them. If "bi" and "xing" are understood in their narrowest sense, in the sense of two writing techniques or rhetorical devices, as

Zhou Zhenfu does,[44] "ni rong qu xin" may be interpreted as a way of making similes or metaphors. Zhou has noted,"'ni rong' refers to the resemblance in appearance and 'qu xin' refers to the similarities in meaning." Therefore, according to him, "ni rong qu xin" means that "one can either imitate the appearance of the object or take the meaning of the object."[45] But one would argue that, according to Liu Xie, "ni rong" and "qu xin" are actually inseparable: they are two aspects of one thing. On the other hand, if the "bi xing" as used by Liu Xie is understood in a broader sense, in the sense of the making of poetic or literary imagery, then "ni rong qu xin" should be interpreted as an approach to the making of imagery. Wang Yuanhua says, "The two words 'rong' and 'xin' in the phrase 'ni rong qu xin' both fall into the category of artistic imagery. They are the two sides of the image: 'rong' is its outside while 'xin' is its inside."[46] While I would agree with Wang that this issue should be discussed within the context of image-making, I do not see any justification in Wang's equating *wu* (the object) with *xiang* (the image). While an image derives from an object, the image is by no means identical to the object. Rather the image is the mind's notion of objects. "Ni rong qu xin" then is an approach to the making of imagery, but not the making of imagery itself. "Rong " is the appearance, or the outside, of the object and not of the image; "xin" refers to what is immanent in the object and not the inside of the image. "Qu xin," or "to take the heart," means to find out and to grasp the core, the essence, or the immanent quality of the object, referring to a poetic vision which seems able to see into the heart of things. Here two points must be made clear immediately. First, what Liu means by the essence or the immanent quality of the object should be distinguished from the essence or quality in the scientific sense, in the sense of physics, chemistry or biology. The essence or quality in the scientific sense is completely independent of man's feelings and it is not the job of art to reveal any characteristics of things at all - it would then compete ineffectually with science - but rather to do something valuable to the psyche of the person.[47] What Liu means by "heart" is the intrinsic quality of an object which makes the object the object as

it appears rather tham as it is and which distinguishes the object from any other objects. In the making of *bixing*, the poet should, through a careful observation of the phenomenal world, grasp the essence of the object to be described so that he would not "portray a swan as if it were a duck." Secondly, "to take the heart" should not be confused with the extraction of meaning from the object. Zhou Zhenfu explains "qu xin" as "to take the meaning of the object."[48] Wang Yuanhua, in explaining "qu xin" also says, "the making of imagery requires not only the imitation of the appearance of reality (or external existence), but the extraction of the significance of reality."[49] It is arguable whether the object or reality has its inherent meaning and whether a poet can extract meaning from the object or reality as one extracts juice from fruit. In my view, meaning does not exist within the object or reality, ready to be extracted. Meaning exists in the relationship between the object and the subject; for it is the poet's conception of the object that he acquires through an interplay between his internal and external worlds that constructs the meaning of the object as suggested in a poem. Liu Xie says, "Things which are as disparate as Hu (in the North) and Yue (in the South), when brought together, can become akin to the liver and the gall"[50]. When things of different nature are brought together on the basis of resemblance or association, a new relationship is established and meaning created. To use Liu Xie's own examples,

> "The ju-jiu bird observes the separation of sexes and therefore is compared with the virtue of the Imperial Consort; the shi-jiu bird is single-minded and therefore is likened to the righteousness of the Lady."[51]

The single-mindedness and the observance of the separation of sexes may be the immanent quality of the birds, but until they are put together with the virtues of the ladies, they possess only potential meanings, which are to be made apparent through the process of *bixing* making. Hegel says, "The poetic imagination, as the activity of a poet, does not, as plastic art does, set before our eyes the thing itself in its external reality (even if that reality be produced by art) but gives us on the contrary an inner vision and feeling of it."[52] Since human feelings towards the

quality of the object vary from person to person and from time to time, different meanings may be derived from the same object. Therefore, it is not quite convincing to suggest that meaning lies inherently within the object or reality. Meaning is neither completely objective nor completely subjective. It is rather an outcome of the interplay of the subject and the object; and as Hegel points out, "it is the subjective side of the poet's spiritual work of creating and forming his material which is clearly the predominant element in his illustrative production...."[53] Liu Xie also emphasizes the dominant role of human mind which, it might be remembered, he compares to the supreme commander in a battle. So in the last analysis, meaning is not an intrinsic quality of the object but a product of human mind at the influence of the external world. And the process of creating the meaning is also one of the making of the *bixing*.

Liu Xie was the first person who made a comparative study of the *bi* and the *xing*, while his predecessors had just juxtaposed definitions of the *fu*, *bi* and *xing*. According to Liu Xie, the distinctions between the *bi* and the *xing* are as follows:

1. The *xing* means to evoke; the *bi* means to adhere;
2. The *xing* is related to emotion (*qing* 情); the *bi* is related to idea and thought (*li* 理);
3. To put 1 and 2 together, we have this: the *xing* means to evoke emotions while the *bi* means to express a thought by means of comparison. However, the *xing* is not totally irrelevant to thought; rather it often contains a message which is hidden in subtle language;
4. Often in the *xing* criticism or protest is clothed in metaphors, while in the *bi* criticism or protest is expressed in relatively straightforward and obvious language;
5. Therefore, the *xing* is obscure and oblique, while the *bi* is obvious and direct (*bi xian, xing yin*);[54]
6. The *xing* is "great" [*da* 大] or important, while the *bi* is "small" [xiao 小] or insignificant (*xi xiao er qi da*)[55] Here Liu criticises what

he sees as a wrong tendency of practising the small (*bi*) while ignoring the great (*da*), which has been in existence since the Han dynasty.

7. Likewise, the *xing* is better or higher than the *bi* in both their didactic and aesthetic values.

The first distinction, that between "fu li," or "to attach a thought to something" and "qi qing" or "to evoke emotion," should be conceived as a difference of emphasis. In the *xing*, it is the "qing" that predominates; in the *bi*, it is the "li" that commands. However, neither is the *bi* totally detached from emotion, nor is the *xing* completely free from thought. Liu Xie says that in the *bi* "one castigates out of accumulated indignation," which obviously involves the expression of emotion. He says that in the *xing* "one presents criticism or protest clothed in a medley (or cluster) of analogies," which certainly involves the expression of thought. Therefore, the distinction between the *bi* and the *xing* in this respect lies mainly in two different ways in which criticism or protest is conveyed; i.e., the difference between the use of "chi yan" (overt and straightforward language) and the use of "tuo feng" (covert and oblique language).

Because of the difference, there comes the second distinction that the *bi* is obvious and the *xing* is, by contrast, obscure. In the *xing*, Liu says, the implications of a poem are "like the first rays of light before dawn" and "can be understood only when commentaries are invoked."[56] Although both the *bi* and the *xing* involve the use of figurative language, in the *bi* the comparison between the *wu*, or object, and the *yi*, or meaning, is obvious, while in the *xing*, the comparison is implied.

Liu Xie was echoed by Kong Yingda of the Tang dynasty, who said,

> Although both the *bi* and the *xing* involve the use of external objects, the *bi* is obvious, while the *xing* is obscure. The obvious should come before the obscure; therefore, (in the order of the Six Principles) the *bi* is placed before the *xing*. The *Mao zhuan* labels the *xing* poems only because in the *xing* the *li* [thought] is obscure.[57]

Qian Zhongshu challenges Liu Xie's distinction of the *bi* and the *xing*, dismissing the distinction as superficial and irrelevant to the essential difference between the

two.[58] It is my contention that, on one hand Liu's distinction between the two is by no means confined to this point as has been stated above and on the other hand, although the difference between the obscure and the obvious is often a difference of degree and might not constitute an essential distinction, it is certainly one of the major distinctions between the *bi* and the *xing*. What is "*yin* [obscurity]"? Liu Xie's definition is "'*Yin*' means that there is another meaning outside the text." "The beauty of the obscure lies in its double meaning."[59] The requirement of "another meaning outside the text" is precisely one of the salient features of the *xing*. This distinction between the *bi* and the *xing* is made from the perspective of the aesthetic character of poetry. We will return to this point in the next section, in which Zhong Rong's theory will be discussed.

Liu Xie considers the writings of the Han dynasty inferior to those of the Zhou dynasty (i.e. the *Shi jing*). The reason, he explains, lies in the fact that in the former the *xing* is neglected while the *bi* is used profusely. He says,

> (The literary business) in the Han dynasty might be flourishing, but men of letters were flattering and weak in character. The theory of remonstrance (in literature) was abandoned and therefore the principle of the *xing* was lost. In its stead, the *fu* and the *song* assumed prominence and literature in the *bi* style became as voluminous as clouds. That was really a trend against the principles of the old days.[60]

It seems that Liu Xie has attributed the function of giving remonstrance exclusively to the *xing*. This contradicts the definitions he gives at the beginning of the chapter. Deprived of the more important function of remonstrance, the *bi* is reduced to a mere literary device for ornament which serves only to "add beauty (to literary writings)," and to "startle listeners and catch their attention."[61] Therefore, "the *xing* is great and the *bi* is small." This seeming inconsistency can be explained by the theory that there are actually two sorts of *bi*, which Liu Xie implied but failed to spell out: the *bi* as embodied in the poems of the *Shi jing* and the *bi* as used by the Han writers of the *fu* (rhymed prose).[62] Ji Yun says, "Not only had the principle of the *xing* been lost, but the *bi* was different from the *bi* of the *Three*

Hundred Poems (the *Shi jing*). Roughly speaking, the *bi* that appears in the *fu* (rhymed prose) follows the sound, chases the shadow and imitates the appearance."[63] In other words, in the *fu* of the Han dynasty, the *xing* is rarely used. What one can find is a kind of degenerated *bi* which is totally different in quality from that in the *Shi jing*.

To conclude this section: In Liu Xie, the concept of the *xing* operates chiefly in two meanings. First, it means the arousal of the poet's feelings and emotions at the stimulus of external existence as well as the poetic state into which the poet enters when he is emotionally aroused. Second, it refers to a mode of expression, which is the major part of the creative process. This process is characterised by the interaction of the object and the subject, which results in the fusion of the perceiving subject and the perceived object. The poet, in his contemplation and imagination explores his feelings and ideas by resorting to constant dialogue with the phenomenal world and eventually has his feelings manifested in concrete imagery. Liu Xie, in the summaries to the chapters "Shen si" and "Bi xing" conspicuously uses the compound word *bixing* instead of *bi* and *xing* separately, a significant new invention. The meanings of this compound he fails to clarify but they can perhaps be understood as image- or symbol-making in Coleridgean theories of imagination. Liu Xie makes a valuable study of the distinctions between the *bi* and the *xing*. By comparing the *xing* with the *bi*, he shows that the hallmarks of the *xing* are evocative, obscure, and emotion- rather than intellect-oriented. Because of its obscurity, the *xing* needs annotations and interpretations to be adequately intelligible.

3.3 ZHONG RONG

Zhong Rong (468-518), a contemporary of Liu Xie, gives a metaphysical explanation of the genesis of poetry in his preface to the *Shi pin* (Grading of Poetry).

> It is life breath [*Ch'i*] which moves the external world, and the external world that moves us. Our sensibilities, once stirred, manifest themselves in dance and songs. This manifestation illumines heaven, earth and man, and makes resplendent the whole of creation. Heavenly and earthly spirits depend on it to receive oblation, and ghosts of darkness draw upon it for secular reports. For moving heaven and earth and for stirring ghosts and spirits, there is nothing better than poetry.[64]

Zhong Rong speaks of the relationship between the universe, man and poetry, describing man as both the producer and the consumer of poetry. As a producer, man is aroused by Nature and manifests his feelings and emotions in poetry. As a consumer, man reads and uses poetry in sacrificial ceremonies and in his intercourse with the mysterious world. He concludes the paragraph with a sentence taken directly from the *Da xu* (the Great Preface) of the *Shi jing*, which prescribes the functions and values of poetry.

Like Lu Ji and Liu Xie, Zhong Rong examines the role played by the phenomenal world in stimulating and evoking the poet's emotions:

> Vernal breezes and springtime birds, the autumn moon and cicadas in the fall, summer clouds and sultry rains, the winter moon and fierce cold - these are what in the four seasons inspire poetic feelings.[65]

But unlike Lu Ji and Liu Xie, Zhong Rong has not stopped here, confining the external world to Nature and nature objects. His horizon is extended to the human world, social life and personal experience. He speaks of the influence of human activities on poetic creation:

> At an agreeable banquet, through poetry one can make friendship dearer.
> When parting, one can put one's sadness into verse.
>
> When a Chu official [Chu Yuan (343-277 BC)] is banished -
>
> When a Han consort [Pan Chieh-yu or Wang Chao-chun (fl. 33 BC)] has to leave the palace -
>
> When white bones are strewn across the northern plain,
> And souls go chasing tumbleweed [as in the poems by Ts'ao Ts'ao (155-220, Wang Ts'an and Hsieh Chan (387-421)]
>
> When arms are borne in frontier camps,
> And a savage spirit overflows the border (as in a poem by Chiang Yen (444-505)]

When the frontier traveller has but thin clothing,
And all tears are spent in the widow's chambers [as in the Old Poems and in Ho Yen's (190-249) verse...]

When the ornaments of office are divested and one leaves the court,
Gone, no thought of returning - [as in the poems by Chang Hsieh, Yuan Shu (408-453), and Shen Yueh]

When by raising an eyebrow a woman [Lady Li in Li Yen-nien's (140-87 BC) poem] wins imperial favor,
And with a second glance topples the state

- These various situations all stir the heart and move the soul. If not put into poetry, how can such sentiments be expressed? If not put into song, how can these emotions be vented?[66]

"Feelings change with what one practises, and sentiments arise when one is stirred by objects,"[67] wrote Sun Chuo (ca. 300-380), a writer of the Jin dynasty (265-420). Zhong Rong is certainly not the first writer who has recognized that man's social existence has an influence on one's literary creation. Nevertheless, his examination of those poems written before his times reveals the relationship between certain aspects of human life and major themes in Chinese poetry. It is man's personal experience, or rather, personal sufferings that may turn into poetic expression at the stimulus of natural objects. What Zhong means by poetry is of course lyric. The content of a lyric work of art, as Hegel puts it, "must be the individual person and therefore with all the details of his situation and concerns, as well as the way in which his mind with its subjective judgement, its joy, admiration, grief, and in short, its feelings comes to consciousness of itself in and through such experiences."[68] But it is not any experience that can be poetic, just as it is not the pollen of any flower that can be turned into honey. Some evoke and some simply do not. Although China has a history of poetry going back more than three thousand years and as many poetic writings as possible, the themes of poetry are quite limited and most of the common ones are already included in Zhong Rong's short list.

Starting from the basic theory that poetry expresses human feeling and emotion, Zhong Rong argues against the use of allusions in poetry.

> It has become the standard view that in writing one should use topical allusions. It is time that documents dealing with the ordering of the state should draw upon extensive erudition about ancient matters; and in making known virtuous conduct and in writing point-counterpoint arguments and memorials to the throne, one should explore past accomplishment thoroughly. But when it comes to expressing human feeling and emotion in verse, what is praiseworthy about the use of allusion?[69]

Poetry does not need to borrow authority from other texts to make it more eloquent; for, as Dr Johnson remarked, "passion runs not after remote allusions and obscure opinions."[70] Poetry calls for a natural sign which comes intuitively to one's heart and will meet the needs of expressing private feelings rather than discussing non-poetic subjects or communicating prosaic messages. Every feeling or sensation is different from every other; and it is impossible to render one's sensation as one actually experiences them through the conventional and stereotyped language. Each poet has his unique personality; each of his moments has its special tone, its special combination of elements. And it is the poet's task to find, to discover, the special language which will alone be capable of expressing his peculiar personality and feelings. Such a language has to be sought in the facts of the natural world as well as the human world. Thus Zhong Rong quotes four famous lines to illustrate his viewpoint:

> [The line by Hsu Kan (170-217)] "Thinking of you is like flowing water" merely relates what struck the eye. [Ts'ao Chih's line] "The high terrace - much sad wind" simply states what was seen. [The line by Chang Hua] "In the clear morning I climb Lung Peak" makes no use of allusion. And as for [Hsieh Ling-yuen's line] "The bright moon shines on the piled snow," could this have been derived from a canonical or historical text?[71]

What strikes the eye is nature objects or scenes. What strikes the eye stirs the poet's heart and arouses his feeling and emotion, which has grown out of his experience in social life and has been stored in the depth of his mind. When the natural objects or scenes fuse with the poet's emotion, they turn into special signs signifying the poet's state of mind and become poetic expression just as the line from Ts'ao Chih's poem "The high terrace - much sad wind" symbolizes the

sorrowful state of mind of a person in a high position. What, then, is the alternative for allusions? Zhong's answer is *zhi xun* or direct pursuit:

> Examine the best expressions past and present; the majority of them are not patched or borrowed. They all derived from the *direct pursuit* of the subject.[72]

The poetic language of a first-class poet, Zhong Rong seems to argue, is capable of transcending the distinction between experience and the representation of experience and can transform all individual experience into general truth. Hence the poet is advised to obtain inspiration as well as source materials from his own experience. To use materials taken from other texts and to resort to stereotyped expressions are not artistic creation at all but are merely rehashed patchwork like "a copybook exercise." For Zhong Rong, the best quality of poetry is not the poet's learning that finds expression in poetry, but "natural beauty" (zi ran ying zhi 自然英旨), which can be achieved perhaps only through *direct pursuit*.

It is against a trend of the over-use of allusion that Zhong Rong advocates *direct pursuit*. To carry on a discussion of the use of allusion any further would go beyond the scope of this thesis. Suffice it to say that, according to Zhong, the difference between *direct pursuit* and the improper use of allusion draws a line of demarcation between poetic and non-poetic writings or, in a lesser degree, between good and poor poetry.

Zhong Rong's concept of *direct pursuit* requires the poet to write what strikes the eye or what is directly sensed, i.e. one's unmediated immediate experience. This does not mean, however, that Zhong Rong confines the poet's task to the description of the appearance of the external world. In his comment on the poetry of Xie Lingyun, he says:

> Hsieh's (Xie's) poetic origins go back to Ts'ao Chih (Cao Zhi). Because he mixes in the style of Chang Hsieh (Zhang Xie), he sets much store on clever resemblance, while surpassing Chang in being unrestrained. Hsieh really suffers from prolixity. I myself feel that for such a man, whose poetic inspirations are many and whose talent is lofty and extensive - who writes down whatever strikes his eye in such a way that, internally, it is never lacking in thought, and externally, nothing is left out - for such a man, lavishness is quite all right.[73]

In Zhong's eyes, Xie Lingyun is an excellent example of a good poet who writes "what strikes his eye." Xie's strength, however, lies not only in his "clever resemblance," which certainly is one of the major characteristics of Xie's poetry, but also in his abundance of thought. In other words, in Xie's poetry, what strikes the eye externally and what is evoked internally are both represented and well balanced.

Zhong attributes this quality to Xie's bubbling poetic inspiration, which is *xing* in the Chinese original. It is quite clear that what Zhong means by *direct pursuit* is to seek for poetic inspiration produced primarily through sensual stimulus by confronting the poet with the external world. This brings to mind the *xing* in the sense of aesthetic evocation resulting from the interplay between the subject and the object. Zhong Rong, however, refrains from using the term *xing* and retains its use for a quite different meaning.

In the preface of his *Shi pin*, Zhong Rong offers his definitions of the terms *fu*, *bi* and *xing*.

> Poetry has three principles: *xing*, *bi* and *fu*. When writing has come to an end but meaning lingers on, this is "xing." When an object is used to express an intention, this is "bi." And when affairs are recorded directly, the objective world being put into words, this is "fu." If one uses these three great principles judiciously, backing them up with lively force and lending them beauty of coloration, so that those who read from one's work find it inexhaustible and those who hear it are moved, this is perfect poetry.[74]

These definitions first strike us as something that considerably deviates from the tradition of Chinese literary criticism so far as we have examined it. Traditionally, critics would speak of Six Principles in accordance with *the Zhou li* and the *Da xu*. Here Zhong has left out three, all titles of the three component parts of the *Shi jing*. Traditionally, the three terms are listed in the order of *fu*, *bi* and *xing*, as can be seen in the *Zhou li* and the *Da xu*. Now Zhong Rong has placed the *xing* before the *bi* and *fu*, indicating that he gives the *xing* greater prominence. What is more, the political connotations which are supposed to be inherent in these

terms cannot be seen any more in Zhong's definitions. He discusses these terms strictly within the scope of literary studies. The main difference, however, lies in the definitions themselves. As Wang Kan has noted, Zhong Rong "interprets the *bi* and *xing* in a different way from that of the annotators of the classics."[75] Zhong defines the *xing* from an aesthetic perspective, differing not only from all his predecessors, but from his own way of defining the *bi* and *fu*, which are characterized as two ways of writing.

This does not mean that history has turned its direction with Zhong Rong. Rather, Zhong has merely highlighted what is implied in the definitions given by Zheng Zhong, Zhi Yu and Liu Xie. According to Liu Xie, "meaning outside the text" is one of the properties of *xing* poetry; according to Zhong Rong, it is the most important hallmark, if not the only hallmark, of the *xing* poetry.

It is perhaps puzzling that Zhong, having formulated these general criteria for superlative poetry, fails to apply them to his specific critiques of individual poets. In fact he never makes reference to these normative criteria in the body of his work, where the grading and critique of one hundred and twenty-two poets are carried out, although from time to time he uses such language that may remind one of his definitions of the three. When he says of Ruan Ji's poetry, "His words are those of everyday signs and sounds, yet the feelings he expresses go above and beyond the universe," his comment may bring to mind his definition of the *xing*. When he says of Xi Kang's poetry, "His poetic figures are clear and far-reaching," one would connect this comment with his definition of the *bi*. And when he says of Cao Pi's poetry, "His more than one hundred compositions are generally common and direct, like ordinary dialogue,"[76] one would probably think of his definition of the *fu*. His failure to put these concepts into practical criticism may be explained by the fact that his critiques are mostly general characterizations of the styles of those poets, and not detailed analysis of individual poems.

However, Zhong does mention the word "xing" several times, which shows that he has not completely ignored the traditional use of the term. He says of Tao

Qian's poetry, "ci *xing* wan qie," which, according to Chia-Ying Yeh's translation, is "his tz'i [*ci*] and his Hsing [*xing*] are perfectly matched." Yeh further explains the hsing [*xing*] as referring to "the feeling that arises out of contact between mind and matter."[77] This explanation brings Zhong Rong's use of the *xing* perfectly into line with that of Lu Ji, Zhi Yu and Liu Xie.

In his comment on the poetry of Zhang Hua, Zhong says, "His style is florid, while his *xingtuo* is commonplace."[78] Here *xingtuo* may be understood as an implicit emotion or thought in the disguise of an innocent image. This use of the term may date back to Zheng Zhong and Zheng Xuan and therefore is well within the tradition.

In summary, Zhong Rong offered a new definition of the *xing*, which characterizes the aesthetic quality of the *xing* poetry. In his critiques of individual poets, however, he returned to the traditional use of the term from time to time. Most of all, Zhong Rong advanced the concept of *direct pursuit*. By *direct pursuit*, he meant direct contact and observation of the nature object and immediate correlation with the emotion. The poet is well advised to seek inspiration and to search for concrete symbols with which to communicate inner experience through direct contact with and intuitive comprehension of Nature, nature objects and natural scenes. "Symbols," as John Senior has noted, "are discovered, not translated."[79] By dismissing the use of allusions as "copy-book exercise," Zhong encouraged poets to make their own poetic expressions out of their own personal experience. Judging from the examples he offered, we understand that the poetic expressions he favoured are mostly natural scenes, which are immediate impressionistic evocations of situations in which the state of mind of the speaker is the centre of interest and thus each brief vista is a fresh symbol pregnant of significance. According to Zhong Rong, it was essential for the poet to create an individual language, to draw from himself, his personal experience, an idiom which would enable him to express his feelings with directness and immediacy. This new

concept of *direct pursuit* may seem to have little direct connection with the concept of the *xing*, but actually it constitutes an integral part of its extremely rich connotations, especially when the *xing* is observed as a mode of literary creation. With Liu Xie's *meng ya bi xing* and Zhong Rong's *zhi xun*, Chinese symbolism has taken full shape.

4. The Tang Dynasty and After

The Tang (618-907) was a dynasty full of contradictions. While it was one of the most powerful and prosperous in Chinese history, it was also politically one of the most unstable and chaotic. The average length of the reign of each Tang emperor lasted merely 12.57 years, compared with 15.78 years for the Han, 17.72 years for the Song, 16.23 years for the Ming and 24.58 years for the Qing. The period during the reign of Emperor Xuan Zhong (712-756) was certainly one of the best times in Chinese history. Yet at the rebellion of An Lushan in 755, the dynasty fell drastically from the peak of prosperity to the abyss of civil war. Although there were signs of some recovery during the mid-Tang period, the empire never regained its previous vigour and splendour. In fact, it was ever after plagued by a worsening power struggle, eunuch politics, local warlordism and foreign invasions. Living in this era, the Chinese literati, while encouraged by the newly established civil examination system in their hope for a successful official career, often felt frustrated by aristocratic inheritance, favouritism, corruption and factionalism. Understandably they had a lot to complain about and to protest against. There was need for a new poetic expression, one that would distinguish itself from the form-dominated and pleasure-seeking poetry which had pervaded the last days of the Six Dynasties. This was exactly what Chen Ziang meant by advocating the *xingji*, a synonym of the *bixing*. He found his paradigm in the poetry written during the Han-Wei period when poets spoke of their own feelings and emotions as well as their concerns for the people in a forceful and symbolic language. Chen's theory and practice in poetry exerted great influence on later writers. He was echoed by such great poets as Li Bai (or Li Po), Du Fu (or Tu Fu) and Bai Juyi (or Po Chu'i). Their poetic styles were different; yet they invariably called for the re-introduction

of the ancient *bixing* of the *Shi jing* type and the attention to the subject-matter of poetry. Bai Juyi, in particular, assailed the poetic writings of the Southern Dynasties for their ornateness, triviality, tedious cleverness and shallow conventionality.

Another trend in the Tang study of the *xing* which bore quite different features attributed the *xing* to the expression or communication of human feelings through imagery. Yin Fan initiated the use of the concept of the *xingxiang* or "evocative imagery" in poetry. Wang Changling elaborated various techniques of employing images of nature as evocative elements in the construction of a poetic world. Still another trend can be seen in the theories of those critics such as Jiao Ran and Sikong Tu who stressed and expounded the aesthetic quality a good poem is supposed to have, which, in Sikong's words, aimed at "the taste beyond taste," and "the image beyond image." The Tang dynasty saw the stretching of the meaning of the *xing* in all directions.

The Tang poets and critics were greatly influenced by the then flourishing Chan [Zen] Buddhism in their way of thinking. Buddhist terms and concepts entered into the study of poetry. The influence was sustained and expanded during the Song (960-1279) dynasty when so many poets were Chan Buddhism believers. An even greater influence, however, came from neo-Confucianism, which in essence was another endeavour, comparable to the first one in the Han dynasty, to adapt traditional Confucianism to a new situation and to find a moral authority for the whole universe. Under this influence, Song poetry became more rational and philosophical, and therefore came out in sharp contrast to the emotion-dominated Tang poetry.

Critics began to feel uncomfortable with this tendency. To stem the tide, they called for a return to the Tang tradition, especially the paradigm of the High Tang. The theoretical weapon they wielded was again the *xing* or *bixing*. But this time they ignored the political and moral import that the *xing* or *bixing* could have

and focused on the intuitional imagery and spontaneity the theory of the *xing* or *bixing* might imply and thus consciously or unconsciously expanded its significance in another direction.

The Song also saw the flourishing of the *ci*, a different genre of lyric poetry than the *shi*, For a long time the *ci* was considered inferior to as well as supplementary to the *shi* and had a differing function. When the *shi* became more and more philosophical and intellectually bound, the *ci* proved to be an alternative vehicle for emotions, especially for sexual love and other subtle feelings and thoughts. Compared with the *shi*, the *ci* is less formal, less serious and more flexible. It was in the *ci* lyric that the *xing* or *bixing* was widely employed and, so to speak, gained a new life.

The Ming dynasty (1368-1644) saw the continuing domination of neo-Confucianism in the world of thought. The age of poetry seemed to have gone and given way to prose. This dynasty is characterised by a barrenness of poetic creation and general imitation after the Tang masters. However, in the study of the theory of poetry, Ming scholars made their own contributions. The notion of "fusion of feeling and scene," which was precipitated in Lu Ji's and Liu Xie's writings, embodied in the poetry of major Tang poets and raised by the Song critics as a topic in poetics, finally became mature and was theorised upon in the critical works of the Ming scholars, especially in the critical remarks of Xie Zhen. Accordingly the discussion of the *xing* turned its focus on the treatment of the relationship between the human emotion [*qing*] and the exterior landscape [*jing*]. and on the approaches to the successful union of emotions and scenes.

With the founding of the Qing dynasty (1616-1911), the Chinese people were once again subjected to the tyrannical rule of an alien people. The repressive political situation forced poets to express their feelings and thoughts in an oblique way. Under such circumstances, the ancient theory of the *xing* and the *bixing* once again attracted the interest of poets and critics, encouraging them to reconsider its value and implication. We saw in Wang Fuzhi and Wu Qiao, among others, a new

insight into the theory of the *xing* from the perspective of aesthetics. The Changzhou school of the *ci* applied the theory of the *xing* or *bixing* to the study of the *ci* lyric and set forth a series of aesthetic principles of poetry, bringing the study of the *xing* very close to modern aesthetic theories of symbolism in the Western tradition.

In this chapter, we shall continue to examine the word *xing* as a term of literary criticism in its historical evolution and try to summarise its meanings as it has been used in Chinese literary studies. Moreover, since the Tang dynasty, there have appeared a number of compound words which are closely related to the word *xing* and may be said to have family resemblance relationships in their uses. We need to describe these terms as they have been used by some most important critics in this area.

To have a better understanding of the multiple meaning of the *xing*, it is necessary to analyse the relationship between the essential elements of lyrical poetry: feeling [emotion], thought [idea], object [image], and meaning. We also expect, through this analysis, to have a clearer picture of Chinese ideas of poetry and poetry-writing. Finally, we shall investigate the ancient Chinese theory of the *xiang* and *xiangwan*, which lays the philosophical foundation of Chinese theories of the literary symbolic.

4.1 The Use of the Word *Xing*

The nuclear meaning of the word *xing*, as the *Mao zhuan* annotates, is "qi" in the sense of "arouse," "evoke," "suggest," "inspire," etc.. Other meanings relevant in the context of literary criticism include "yu" [analogy], "qing" [feeling or emotion], "xiang" [appearance, or image], "yi" [meaning, intention, idea], all have intimate relations with the meaning "qi," as they may all be understood as "the things evoked," or "the way to evoke."

Xing in the sense of "qi," or arouse, stimulate or evoke, refers to the response of human mind to the influence or stimulus of external objects or situations or their images, as well as to the way of writing, in which a thing, a situation, a feeling, or an idea, instead of being stated directly, is evoked, suggested or intimated. What is aroused in human mind can be a poetic impulse, an emotion, an idea or a thought.

In Zheng Xuan's commentary on the *Mao zhuan*, as well as in his definitions of the *fu*, *bi* and *xing* which are seen in his annotations to the *Zhou li*, he explained the *xing* as an analogical or metaphorical way of expression. Zheng Zhong defined the *xing* as a symbolic way of expression. Wang Yi, in his interpretation of the *Li sao*, suggested that the author followed the *Shi jing* by adopting the *xing* which he explained as symbolism in the sense of using something material and concrete such as a flower or a bird to stand for something abstract like virtue or vice.

In Lu Ji's essay as well as in many other writings, *xing* is in the sense of poetic sensation, poetic impulse or poetic state of mind, similar in these senses to the Western concept of "inspiration."[1]

Zhi Yu said, "*xing* means verbal response to 'gan', or influence, stimulus and evocation." Wu Qiao said, "To be moved at the influence of things is *xing*."[2] Much earlier than Zhi Yu is the *Li ji*, where we read: "The move of man's heart is a result of the influence of objects. To be moved at the influence of objects takes manifestation in sound." It goes on to enumerate various kinds of emotions arising from the influence, such as "ai" or sad, "le," or happy, "xi," or delighted, and "nu" or angry. Hence, the move of human heart results in emotions. Liu Xie wrote, "*Xing* means to evoke. ... to evoke emotion one expresses his intentions through insignificant things."[3] Later, Li Zhongmeng of the Song dynasty and Shen Xianglong of the Qing dynasty used similar words to describe the *xing*: "To be evoked emotionally on contact with objects is called *xing*, in which objects arouse emotion." Shen said, "Or a scene is borrowed to evoke emotions; this is *xing*."[4] Jia

Dao of the Tang dynasty put it bluntly that *xing* means *qing* [emotion]: "To be moved by the object is called *xing*. *Xing* is *qing*. Externally, one is influenced by objects and internally one is moved by emotion. Emotion cannot be held back; hence it is called *xing*."[5]

Zhong Rong's definition of the *xing* focuses on the surplus meaning of the *xing* poems and raises the issue of the two possible sets of meaning: that which lies within the words and the text of a poem and that which without. The former is limited and the latter is unlimited. Liu Xie said, "The *xing* is obscure." To be obscure "means there exists another meaning outside the text." And "poems are better written when they have double significance."[6] He also placed stress on the two sets of meanings within and without the text. After them, Bai Juyi claimed that poetry should, like the *Shi jing* poems, be evoked here but emerge with its meaning there. Zheng Qiao of the Song dynasty said, "In the *xing* (poems), what can be seen are here and what can be attained are there."[7] "What can be seen" refers to the objects in the outside world, the images in a poem; "What can be attained" are, if we follow Hirsch's differentiation in his book *The Validity of Interpretation*, the meaning and significance of a poem. The above critics all noticed that in the *xing* there is an antithesis of "here" and "there," insisting that the *xing* implies double signification.

One of the meanings of the *xing* which is given in the dictionary *Ji yun* 集韵, is *xiang* or image. Jiao Ran defined the *xing* as "to set up an image *[xiang]* first and then to relate it to a human situation."[8] Quoting two lines from Cao Zhi, "The high terrace - much sad wind; the morning sun shines on the north woods," Wang Changling commented, "This is Cao Zhi's *xing*." Obviously, Cao's two lines are all images, and Wang called them *xing*. Zhang Xuecheng pointed out, "The *xiang* or image in the *Yi jing* or the *Book of Changes*, is the equivalent of the *xing* in the *Shi* or the *Book of Poetry*." He also said, "Although the *xiang* in the *Yi jing* involves all the six classical arts, it and the *bixing* of the *Shi* are two sides of the

same thing." Wen Yiduo [Wen I-to] asserted, "The *xing* and the *xiang* are both the *yin* or enigma."[9]

That *xing* may mean *yi* (intention, idea, meaning, etc.) is seen in many writings. For instance, Yin Fan in his *Heyue yingling ji* comments on Chang Jian's poetry, "His intention is far-reaching and his idea [*xing*] is uncustomary;" and comments on Liu Muxu: "(His) feelings are exquisite, while his intentions [*xing*] are far-reaching. The close relations of *xing* and *yi* are also seen in many definitions of the *xing*. Zhong Rong said, "Where words end and meaning [*yi*] continues, that is *xing*." Kong Yinda said, "All those pertain to the *xing* which evoke one's heart by using categorical analogies as in the *Shi jing*, where plants, birds and beasts are cited to manifest one's intention [*yi*]." Jiao Ran said, "*Xing* is the meaning/intention [*yi*] that underlies the image." Wang Fuzhi said, "*Xing* lies half way between the intentional or the conscious [yu *yi*] and the unintentional or the unconscious [wu *yi*]." Chen Tingchuo said, "What is called *xing* means that feeling/intention [*yi*] comes before the brush and spirit goes beyond the words."[10] The *yi* in all these quotations may mean quite a few different things; but they are certainly related with feeling, intention, and meaning. And we may say that the *xing* actually means the *yi* arising from the stimulus of the object on human mind.

Since the Tang dynasty, critics have been more interested in investigating the *xing* within the framework of the relationship between the *qing* (human feeling/emotion) and the *jing* (natural scene/landscape). Wang Changling (698-757), a poet of the High Tang, repeatedly emphasizes that poems in which ideas are divorced from the scene would "lack flavour" and scenes, on the other hand, must be arranged in accordance with ideas.[11] He says that the *xing* of the poet arises from his response to the influence [*gan*] of nature. When the poet is affected, his mind "constantly echoes and responds. Whether scene, sight, or myriad things, it would start an intercourse with them."[12] And the interplay will result in the fusion of human feeling and natural scene. He quotes a poem by Chang Jian to illustrate his views:

Murmuring from all the seven strings,
Thousands of trees in clear trailing sounds;
Making whiter the moon reflecting in the river,
And deeper the water running in the stream.

He terms this phenomenon "gan-xing shi," or affective-evocative type in his essay on "the Seventeen Types" in writing poetry.[13] In this context, the *xing* is treated as a poetic technique, addressing the issue of how to charge a poem with greatest evocative power by using natural scenes. This technique is particularly relevant to beginning and closing a poem. The sixth type of Wang's "Seventeen Types" is called "Bixing Beginning," which Wang explains, "If the object-scene happens to correspond to the theme as indicated in the title of a poem, the scene may be presented in a couple of lines and followed by the theme-lines which are supposed to form a *bixing* relationship with the scene-lines."[14] As an example, Wang quotes the following verses from his own poem "To Li Shiyu":

Into the blue void a lone cloud sails.
At dusk it must return to the hills.
A high-minded man with his firm resolution;
But when will he see the emperor?[15]

If "a high-minded man" is not employed by the emperor, he will retire into hermitage like a lone cloud sailing into the blue void. Here the scene-lines, as in the poems of the *Shi jing*, come before the theme-lines. They perform the functions of introducing the time and place, presenting the scene, setting the tone and mood, and bringing out the theme. These scene-lines may be called the initial *xing*.

In the tenth and seventeenth types, Wang Changling discusses the use of object-scene in concluding a poem. Wang designates them respectively as "the Type of Closing with Suspended Thoughts," and "the Type of Closing with Expectation." The difference between these two types seems to be minute. Wang explains the first as follows:

> Whenever a poem comes to the closure, thoughts (or meaning) often need to be suspended so that when the words come to an end, the meaning will not. For example, suppose one wishes to express a deep feeling of sadness, one should not state it without

> reserve. If the previous line is an idea-line, the next had better be a scene-line; and the scene needs to be agreeable with the feeling.[16]

The overall effect must be expressive of the feeling and, at the same time, appealing and moving to the reader. Wang uses two lines from his own poem as an example:

> Too much drinking, unable to utter a word;
> On the fields and hills the mist rain.[17]

The title of the poem is "Seeing a Friend Off." Instead of stating his deep sorrow at the departure of a friend, the poet uses a seemingly irrelevant scene-line to close the poem, leaving much unsaid. This kind of using object-scene at the end of a poem to evoke meanings beyond the text may be called the ending *xing*.

Wang Changling maintained that poetry arises from "non-action" and starts from the poet's spontaneous "response to nature's stimulus." So writing poetry should be "not difficult" and "not laborious."[18] His views were shared by Xie Zhen (1495-1575) of the Ming dynasty. Xie's idea of the *xing*, like Wang's, comes very close to the concept of inspiration, but inspiration based on the interaction between human feeling and natural scenes rather than on any form of supernatural power. He asserted, "A poem is being accomplished while you are wielding the brush - this is *xing*." He advised poets not to "search for poetry laboriously;" and not to "plan an idea in advance and then make sentences accordingly." In poetic creation, he said, "the *xing* comes first and a poem should be left to take shape naturally and inadvertently." Poems composed this way are "poems of the first class."[19] Thus in Xie Zhen, we have seen: i) The *xing* means the interplay of feeling and scene and the creative power produced in the process of this interplay; ii) The *xing* is not just the beginning of a poetic process but works throughout the whole process, an idea Liu Xie had suggested but failed to articulate. In other words, the *xing* is not simply a psychological factor that occasions the composition of a poem but a psychological activity or process that eventually brings feeling and scene into fusion with each other; and iii) Poems of the *xing* style are not written in accordance with a pre-

designed idea; but rather, they are natural products of a progressive interaction between feeling and scene.

Xie Zhen described the *jing* and *qing* as two essential elements in poetic creation - he called the *jing* (natural scene) "the match-maker of poetry" and the *qing* (human feeling) its "embryo."[20] Wang Fuzhi (1619-1692) seems to be very much in this line. Like Xie, he based his theory of the *xing* on the relationship between the *qing* and the *jing*. He likened this relationship to that between the amber and the mustard, which were believed to be able to attract each other. From here Wang seems to have gone further. He claimed that the *qing* and the *jing* are actually not separable: "They are just called by different names and in poems by the miraculous hand, they are magically fused, leaving no boundary line." Besides, "the *jing* begets the *qing* and the *qing* begets the *jing*."[21]

In this context, the *xing* means poetic ideas grasped by the poet through aesthetic contemplation described by Wang as a process of ceaseless interplay between the *jing* and the *qing* and, that is to say, these ideas are intuited, perceived and not merely thought about. Wang Fuzhi borrowed a Buddhist term "xianliang 現量" to identify this kind of ideas or ideas reached in this fashion. According to him, the *xianliang* or "immediate perception" has three meanings at the same time: i) it is a perception attained at the present moment, not a shadow of the experience of some by-gone period; ii) it is a perception directly received without the mediation of reason or logical analysis; iii) it is a perception of the essence or nature of things, not false conceptions of things which are formed under the influence of human feelings or emotions much like the "pathetic fallacy."[22]

4.2 Several Other Terms Related to the *Xing*

Since the Tang dynasty, a number of compound words related to the word *xing* have been created one. Their appearances, on one hand, indicate the development of the Chinese language from the monosyllabic to the multisyllabic. On the other hand, it also shows the growth of literary criticism in general and of the study of the theory of the *xing* in particular. Each of these compound words, while sharing part of the meanings of the *xing*, also has its own specific emphasis of connotations or functions and in one way or another enriches the theory of the *xing*. Most common and most important of these compound words are *xingji*, *xingxiang*, *bixing*, *yixing* and *xingqu*. We propose to examine them one by one.

XINGJI 興寄 The early Tang poetry was still very much under the influence of the Six Dynasties, especially that of the Qi-Liang period. Poetry at that time was largely an aristocratic concern. The *yingzhishi* or poetry written at the imperial command occupied the dominant position. It was a subgenre of the *gongti* or palace-style poetry, occasioned by various court activities and devoted to the celebration of the glory of the emperor and the grandeur of his palace. Many of its writers were high-ranking officials. The overall voluptuous mood of the poetry was totally out of tune with the otherwise vigorous new empire. A new diction was needed and sought to cure the disease. Chen Ziang (661-702), who was deeply dissatisfied with the state of poetry in his day and the poetry of the age preceding him, expressed his denunciation of the decadent literary mood in a famous preface. His prescription for the diseased literature contained two words - "fenggu" and "xingji." He said,

> Literature has been in decline for five hundred years. Since the Jin and Song dynasties, the *fenggu* (literally, wind and bone) characteristic of the literature of the Han and Wei dynasties have discontinued. ... In my spare time, I have perused poems written during the Qi and Liang dynasties, which, in my opinion, simply vie with each other for mere literary embellishment and have completely ignored the *xingji* (evoking and commending). Each time I sigh

> deeply, fearing that the way of the ancient has hopelessly lost and that nobody will ever write poems in the style of the *feng* and *ya* (of the *Shi jing*).[23]

This letter had the effect of a declaration of war against a literature *malade* and heralded a revolution in poetry. No wonder it shook the world of poetry so fundamentally that Chen has ever since been acclaimed a hero who laid the foundation of the great Tang poetry.[24] However, we should not be too serious about his claim that "literature has been in decline for five hundred years;" for accepting that without reserve would mean to write off at a single stroke such great writers and poets as Ruan Ji, Xi Kang, Tao Yuanming and Xie Lingyun, from whom Chen Ziang and other major Tang poets have benefited so much. It is important to recognize that his scathing attack is mainly directed at the contemporary poetry and poets, some of whom are his colleagues at court.

Chen Ziang did not explain what he meant by the *xingji*. Its connotation has to be worked out indirectly through a comprehensive study of what he opposed and approved in poetry and poetics in combination with a study of his own poetic writings. Briefly, he opposed the erotic, insincere, ornamental and descriptive diction characteristic of the *gongti* or the palace style poetry of the Qi-Liang and the early Tang periods. He favoured the vigorous, forceful, sincere and evocative diction of the Han-Wei period. He wrote, among others, thirty-eight poems all under the same title of "Gan yu" or "Thoughts of What I Have Encountered," which attracted many imitators and exerted enormous influence on the Tang poets after him. Here is one of Chen's *gan yu* poems:

> Orchids grow through spring and summer,
> Lush and luxuriant, fresh and green.
> Secluded and alone, the only colour in the empty woods.
> Red petals crown the purple stems.
> Ever so slowly, daylight comes late;
> Ever so finely, autumn winds arise.
> The season's flowers will all wither and fall,
> How could their sweet intent be fulfilled![25]

A man's talent or a man of talent is likened to the beauty of the orchid flower. When his talent is not timely used in the service of his country, the man will grow

old and end up in accomplishing nothing, just as the flower will wither and fall at the rise of the autumn wind. Most of Chen's thirty-eight *gan yu* are allegorico-symbolical poems of this fashion.

So Chen Ziang is advocating a sincere, direct personal feeling concerning political and social affairs.[26] This kind of feeling, according to Chen, should not be stated or described but should be "entrusted" [*ji* 寄] to a symbolic form. Thus the combination of a fresh, elevated feeling with an evocative, symbolic form results in a brand-new diction, which has made Chen's poetic writings and his notion of the *xingji* so very important and so very different from the poetry and poetics of Qi-Liang period and their Tang followers.

However, it would be unfair to say that the language of the poems of the Qi-Liang period is completely descriptive and explicit. On the contrary, those poems are often quite suggestive. But for one thing, what they suggest is largely decadent erotic love which Chen would detest. For another, although some of the images in those poems have strong symbolic implications, they are basically images that "shade off into symbols."[27] Chen Ziang is different. In Chen's poems, there are not just sporadic symbols dotted in a sea of descriptive verses. In Chen Ziang, the poetic use of symbolism has become conscious and systematic. Here we see a conscientious poet consciously and consistently employ allegorical/symbolical language-structure to express serious feelings and thoughts. This is the gist of his notion of the *xingji*. It is certainly a significant innovation, which has made Chen deserve "a statue of gold."

XINGXIANG **興 象** As has been said, the *xing* may have the meaning of *xiang* or image and nature objects become images in poetry. However, nature objects are not naturally the *xing* in poetry, nor is any image in a poem. What kind of the *xiang* can be counted as the *xing*? Kong Yingda's definition of the *xing* indicates that only those *xiang* that are able to manifest the poet's intentions or feelings can be called *xing*. Wang Changling said, "In poetry, it is always better to

have images fused with feelings/intentions [*yi xia*]. Images that lack feelings may still be ingenious, but absolutely useless."[28]

This kind of *xiang* was called by Yin Fan as *xingxiang* in the sense of evocative image. Yin Fan joined in the attack on the poetry from the Qi-Liang period to the Early Tang. In the preface to his anthology of Tang poetry, he accuses those shallow, "empty-bottle-type" poets of being "short of thoughts but excessive in words" and of "completely lacking *xingxiang* and admiring frivolous beauty only."[29] By the *xingxiang*, Yin means poetic images which embody or evoke, by virtue of association, profound feelings or far-reaching significance. In this sense, it is similar in its function and meaning to Chen Ziang's *xingji*. But unlike the *xingji*, the centre of gravity of the *xingxiang* is in the *xiang*, i.e. the image. It demands first of all that poetry is composed of lovely, picturesque images which are spontaneously produced from an evoked, inspired mind, rather than artificially pieced together. Consequently, between the image and the feeling or idea there exists an inherent relationship which ensures that the image is entirely compatible and harmonious with the *xing*, i.e. the feelings or ideas and is adequate in embodying or evoking these feelings or ideas. Hu Yingling (1551-1602) of the Ming dynasty viewed the *xingxiang* as one of the essential elements of poetry. He contended that a poet should consider above everything else the creation of his *xingxiang*, the compatibility of the *xing* and the *xiang*, and also the compatibility of each *xingxiang* with others in the same poem so that all the *xingxiang* of a poem will work in concert to make up a harmonious totality.[30]

YIXING 意興 Because of the close relation of the *xing* and the *yi*, a compound word "*yixing*" was coined. Wang Changling wrote, "There are poems composed out of '*yixing*'. In such a case, poems are written as a result of momentary capability and there is no 'bixing' involved."[31] Here Wang distinguishes the "yixing" from the "bixing." The former is in the sense of poetic impulse, and if there is any idea involved, that must be an unintended product of evocation, and

should be distinguished from the *bixing*, in which ideas are premeditated and arranged in an artistic form.

Yan Yu (fl. 1180-1235) of the Song dynasty, among others, mentioned the term *yixing* in his discussion of the art of poetry. He observed,

> Poetry involves *ci*, *li*, *yi*, and *xing*. Writers of the Southern Dynasties laid stress on the *ci* [rhetoric, language] but were weak in the *li* [thought, principle]. Writers of this dynasty lay stress on the *li* but are weak in the *yi* [ideas, feelings] and *xing* [evocative power]. Writers of the Tang dynasty laid stress on the *yi* and *xing* and the *li* was implied. In the poems written in the Han and Wei periods, the *ci*, *li*, *yi* and *xing* are fused into one, leaving no spoor to be detected.[32]

Obviously, the *yi* and *xing* are both separate terms here. Even if they are able to be understood as one term, this term would not be completely equal to the *yixing* as a compound word as we have seen in the case of Wang Changling. But some critics have not only confused them with the *yixing* as a compound word but also equated them with another term that Yan Yu has used - the *xingqu*.[33] We shall try to prove they have different connotations.

XINGQU 興趣 Generally speaking, the style of Chinese poetry falls into two categories: the style of the Tang poetry and that of the Song poetry.[34] The difference between them is, as Yan Yu said, "writers of this dynasty (Song) lay stress on the *li*. ... Writers of the Tang dynasty laid stress on the *yi and xing*." The human faculty which dominated the Song dynasty and informed its literature was intelligence. It seemed that man had ceased to live from the depths of his nature; he occupied himself for choice with thought. What had confronted Chen Ziang of the Early Tang was a poetry sicklied over with ornateness and triviality. The cure he prescribed was the *xingji*. What confronted Yan Yu in the Song dynasty was a poetry sicklied over with reason and book-knowledge. The cure that Yan offered was the *xingqu*.

The *xing* used here, as elsewhere, means to evoke, to suggest, to elevate or to inspire; the *qu* means interest or pleasure. Yan Yu believed that the rising of the

Song-style poetry[35] is a "disaster."[36] He wanted poetry to return to the paradigm of the Golden Tang, because "the poets of the Golden Tang were concerned only about the *xingqu*."[37]

This notion of the *xingqu* has a multidimensional implication. The end of poetry, according to Yan, is to delight, to give pleasure. He rejected a common practice of that time in which poetry was utilised as an instrument for political strife, and held as a paragon the poetry of the Golden Tang which, he believes, is concerned with the *xingqu* only. This comes very close to what Coleridge has said about the end of poetry. Coleridge believed that "to produce pleasurable interest," is "the peculiar business of poetry to impart."[38]

As to the content of poetry, Yan Yu reiterated the time-honoured doctrine that the business of poetry is to "sing of human nature and human feeling." It is not the business of poetry to display book-knowledge or to carry on an investigation of truth. Yan Yu pointed out, quite rightly, "Poetry requires a peculiar talent and is not concerned with books; it has a peculiar interest and is not concerned with truth."[39] He did not mean, of course, that poets should not read books or should not study truth. In fact he also said, "the ancients did not turn away from books; they certainly did not fail to investigate truth."[40] The point is that books or truth and poetry are just two different things; as Goethe said, "a poet needs all philosophy, but must keep it out of his work."[41]

As to the language of poetry, Yan Yu maintained that poetic language is basically not referential, not a means to an end, not an instrument for inquiring truth. So the best poetry, Yan Yu argued, should avoid "touching the path of reason or falling into the trammel of words."[42] A trammel is an instrument set to catch animals. When animals are caught, the trammel can be put aside. So far as animals can be caught, one does not mind what kind of trammel to use. Poetry is different. Poetry, as Mallarmé once said, is made of words, not of ideas. Different words make different poetry and if the words are put aside, there would be no poetry at

all. Therefore, the language of poetry should not be reduced to a verbal instrument, that is, the *yanquan* [speech-trammel].

Yan Yu found the best poetry in "the poetry of the ancients," which may fulfill all aesthetic requirements for his supreme poetry. "The poetry of the ancients," Yan Yu tells us, is no tautology of reality. It does not refer back to reality. It does not even give away any trace by which the reader will be led to the actual world. "Like the antelope that hangs by its horns, it leaves no spoors to be detected."[43] Poetry presents a virtual world, a poetic illusion; it is, Yan Yu said, "like sound in the air, colour in looks, moon in the water, and image in a mirror."[44] It may be interesting here to note that Arthur Symons used rather similar words in discussing the art of the French Symbolists. Symons said that for Symbolist poets words transform themselves into music, colour, and shadow; "a disembodied music, diaphanous colours, luminous shadow."[45] This kind poetry, Yan Yu pointed out, possesses the most important aesthetic quality of the best poetry: it has "limited words but unlimited meaning."[46]

Thus we may assume that Yan Yu is actually trying to picture an ideal poetry by pretending that he is describing the poetry of the Golden Tang. His ideal poetry is exactly what has been called "pure poetry" in the modern West.[47] This kind of poetry has a "magic" quality which, nevertheless, ultimately depends on the sound, imagery, meaning and emotion and which is attained by elimination of unpoetic elements such as didactic statements and discursive material as far as possible, so that the resulting poetry will be like a song almost (but not quite) without words.

***BIXING* 比 興** Liu Xie began to use *bixing* as a compound word. He did not spell out what he meant by this new coinage. It appears that he tried to express an idea concerning the creation of artistic imagery, an idea which he failed to articulate. When the term was re-introduced in the Tang dynasty, it had already obtained its multiple meanings. Generally speaking, it may be understood as any

one of its three major uses: either as an indirect, implicit and figurative way of expression; or as an artistic way of thinking and writing whereby poetry and non-poetry, literature and non-literature are distinguished; or as a theory about the relationship between literature and reality, which tends to lay the stress on the subject matter of literature.

Chen Ziang's renunciation of the Qi-Liang literature and his promotion of the *xingji* was echoed by Li Bai (701-762). Li was resolved to be a successor of the great tradition initiated and represented by the *Shi jing*. In a poem he expresses his aspirations:

> The great odes (i.e. the *Shi jing*) have had no revival,
> Who will continue the effort after I have gone?
> ... ...
> I desire to select and transmit the old (as Confucius did),
> So that its splendour will last a thousand ages.[48]

Both Chen Ziang and Li Bai tried to effect a literary revolution by calling for a return to those "good old days." On the other hand, Du Fu (712-770) struck a quite different but more balanced note. While he, like Chen and Li, respected and admired the tradition of the *Shi jing* and the *Chu ci*, he refused to dismiss modern poetry since the Six Dynasties as sheer rubbish. He favoured a sympathetic understanding of the poems of his immediate predecessors and was ready to accept that those poems were of the style of their own times. He appreciated the style of the *bixing*. In a poem he expresses his delight in seeing that the *bixing* style has re-appeared in a poem by his friend Yuan Jie.[49] Judging by the poem we may surmise that he understood the *bixing* in its loose sense, in the sense of expressing one's opinion of politics and social affairs in the form of poetry. Perhaps more than anyone else before and since his time, Du used poetry to reflect reality and express his concern for the destiny of his country and the livelihood of the people during those chaotic years in the wake of a rebellion.

However, Bai Juyi (772-846) of the mid-Tang believed that both Li and Du had not gone far enough in writing poetry to reflect social reality. He adopted a

radical utilitarian attitude toward literature and poetry, declaring that "writings should be made for the needs of the time; poetry should be composed for the needs of state affairs." "In a word, literature should be made for the sake of the ruler, the ministers, the people, for things and events, not for the sake of literature."[50] Now it is widely held that Bai Juyi's theory of the *bixing* is similar to Chen Ziang's *xingji*. I would not agree. Chen Ziang advocated the *xingji* to reform literature for literature's sake; whereas Bai reiterated the principle of the *bixing* to reform literature for the sake of politics. His idea of the *bixing* is therefore almost exclusively political, ethical and social. Its centre of gravity is in the subject matter of poetry. In his view, a poem belongs to the *bixing* category when its content involves political or social criticism, disregarding whether metaphors or symbols are used or not. Basically he looked upon poetry as a tool, a weapon and to make sure that the weapon was effective, one must make it easy enough for most possible people to handle. That is why, referring to his *Xinyuefu* (New Ballad Poetry), he declared, "its language is plain and direct so that the reader will find it easy to understand; its message is straightforward and close to reality so that those who hear it will learn a lesson from it ..." In this sense, his theory of the *bixing* has little to do with the *bixing* as Liu Xie had used it and has little to do with the literary quality of poetry and therefore has little value as far as literary criticism is concerned.

However, Bai Juyi was not only a high official with strong sense of social consciousness, he was also an excellent poet. As a poet, he recognised that "poetry has emotion as its roots, language as its leaves, music as its flowers, and meaning as its fruits."[51] He knew that for poetry to be instructive, it must first of all be pleasing. One of the ways to please is to use analogy. He said, "To present by categorical analogy makes the feeling/emotion manifest; when the feeling/emotion is manifested, the influence is easy to effect."[52] From this perspective, he did not completely object to writing indirectly and writing about "wind, flower, snow and

moon" in poetry so long as they had an allegorical connotation like the *Shi jing* poems.

All in all we may perhaps say that Bai Juyi's theory of the *bixing* is more political than literary. It might be helpful to politics but certainly not very effective for literary creation. His own poetic work is a proof. Most of his so-called "feng-yu shi" or allegorical poems, which strictly abide by the *bixing* principle set by himself, have proved to be of much less value than his other writings and are now little read. He himself came to realize the failure of his theory. He said that "those of my poems which average people regard with esteem are exactly what I myself would regard lightly." He admitted that his poems had the weakness of being "too explicit in meaning and too elaborative in thought."[53]

Because of its connection with political and social content, the *bixing* in its later use almost became synonymous with political allegory and was more a value concept than a literary term. It was not until the Qing dynasty that new ideas were added into the theory of the *bixing*.

The Changzhou School of the *ci* lyric remained influential for a considerably long period in the latter half of the Qing dynasty. Roughly speaking, there are three generations of critics in this school. The first generation is represented by the founders of the school, the Zhang brothers - Zhang Huiyan (1761-1802) and Zhang Qi (1765-1833). Their theory of the *bixing* is mainly a theory of allegorical/symbolical interpretation of the *ci* lyric. The second generation may be represented by Zhou Ji (1781-1839) whose theory of the *bixing* is a study of allegorical/symbolical way of writing the *ci* lyric. The third generation of the school may be represented by Tan Xian (1832-1901) and Chen Tingchuo (1853-1892), whose contribution to the theory of the *bixing* is seen in their discussion on the aesthetic codes of the *ci* lyric.

In the preface to his *Ci xuan* or *An Anthology of the Ci Lyric*, Zhang Huiyan defines the *ci* by quoting an explanation of the word "ci" from the *Shuo wen*: "Ci is the verbal [*yan*] exteriorisation of an internal feeling/thought [*yi*]." This definition

has been repeatedly accused of being far-fetched.[54] But I would argue that here Zhang has just applied what is said about the *Shi* in the *Da xu* to the *ci* lyric.[55] Zhang then continues to prescribe what he thinks the *ci* should be like:

> It originates in emotion and employs subtle words to evoke (*xing* in the original) and to affect. Through the expression of the joys and sorrows of ordinary men and women as in folk songs, it speaks of the hidden and resentful feelings of the worthies and gentlemen, feelings that are difficult to express by themselves.[56]

In this sense, Zhang contends, the *ci* comes close to the *Shi jing*, especially to the *bian feng* (the variant *feng*) of the *Shi jing* and Chu Yuan's *Chu ci*.[57] Therefore the *ci* lyric should be treated and interpreted as the *Shi jing* and the *Chu ci*. Referring to his commentary included in his *Anthology*, he explains, "Where there is a deep and hidden meaning, I have tried to bring it out." The way he brings out the deep and hidden meaning of those *ci* lyrics reminds one of the way adopted by the Han Confucians in interpreting the *Shi jing* and the *Chu ci*, that is, the *bixing* mode of interpretation. He would either: i) suggest that the images of a poem under discussion allude to real persons or real events in the real world; or ii) suggest that the poet uses the persona of the poem as a surrogate to express his own mind. In a word, the content of a poem may not be historical, the meaning beyond the poem is definitely historical. His way of interpretation is based on the erotico-political convention of Chinese poetry. From time to time, he also invokes historical facts to bring out the hidden meaning.

Zhang Huiyan used the *bixing* as a compound word and as one concept. He did not bother to discriminate the *bi* and the *xing*. Zhou Ji, one of Zhang's successors, started to make distinctions between these two concepts. But he did not actually use these terms; instead, he spoke of "yu jituo" and "wu jituo." His concept of the *jituo* is approximately equal to allegory. Thus "yu jituo" means "have or with allegory"; and "wu jituo" means "have no or without allegory." He wrote:

> A beginner of the *ci* lyric should try to write allegorically [*yu jituo*]. With allegory (in a poem), the external and the internal of the poem will be well matched and the work will be brilliantly executed.

> When one has established his own style, however, one should try to write un-allegorically [*wu jituo*]. Without allegory (in a poem), the things and events presented in the poem will point to any analogical feelings so that each reader will find his own meaning of the poem in accordance with his own temperament.[58]

By "writing un-allegorically," he may mean two things. He may mean that in writing a *ci* lyric, one should not design an allegorical meaning and stuff it into his poem; or he may mean that one should not make his allegory specific. On another occasion, he used the phrase "zhuan jituo" to mean a specific allegorical meaning. He wrote,

> In learning to write the ci, if one writes un-allegorically, one cannot possibly enter into the profession [*bu ru*]; but if the allegory is made too specific, one cannot possibly come out an expert [*bu chu*].[59]

If an allegory with a specific meaning is undesirable, then the ideal *ci* lyric should be one in which "any object or event will lead to multiple understanding by way of association."[60] When a reader is confronted with such a text, he would feel like a man who, "standing on the edge of a deep pool and admiring the fish, thinks that this is a carp and that is a bream (but without any certainty)."[61] Thus we may say that Zhou's notion of "yu jituo" corresponds to the *bi* and his notion of "wu jituo" to the *xing*. After Zhou, Tan Xian and Chen Tingchuo carried on the exploration of the aesthetic connotations of the notion of *bixing*. Tan Xian used his own expression "bi xing rou hou" (literally, *rou hou* means gentle and profound)[62] and Chen Tingchuo borrowed a set-phrase "chen yu dun cuo" (literally, profound, pent-up, pause and transitional)[63] to characterise the aesthetic qualities of their ideal *ci* lyric written in the *bixing* mode. Chen Tingchuo made an extra effort to distinguish the *bi* and the *xing* as two different aesthetic tendencies, which we shall discuss later.

4.3 The *Xing* and the Relationship Between Emotion, Image, and Meaning

To sum up, the *xing* may have the senses of "evoke," "inspiration," "image," "feeling or emotion," "intention or meaning," "poetic sentiment," "poetic sensation," "poetic state of mind," and "surplus meaning beyond the text." The fact that all these different meanings are compacted into one single term has its intrinsic reasons which, I believe, can be seen mainly in the complicated relationship between the feeling (or emotion), thought, image (or object) and meaning. All these meanings which are seemingly irrelevant to each other, come together and get united around aesthetic evocation - the axis of artistic creation and appreciation. To understand this relationship, Kandinsky's theory of art may be of some help.

Kandinsky holds that a work of art consists of two elements, the inner and the outer, i.e. the emotion and the form. "This emotion has the capacity to evoke a similar emotion in the observer."[64] He describes the whole process of the creation and reception of art as follows:

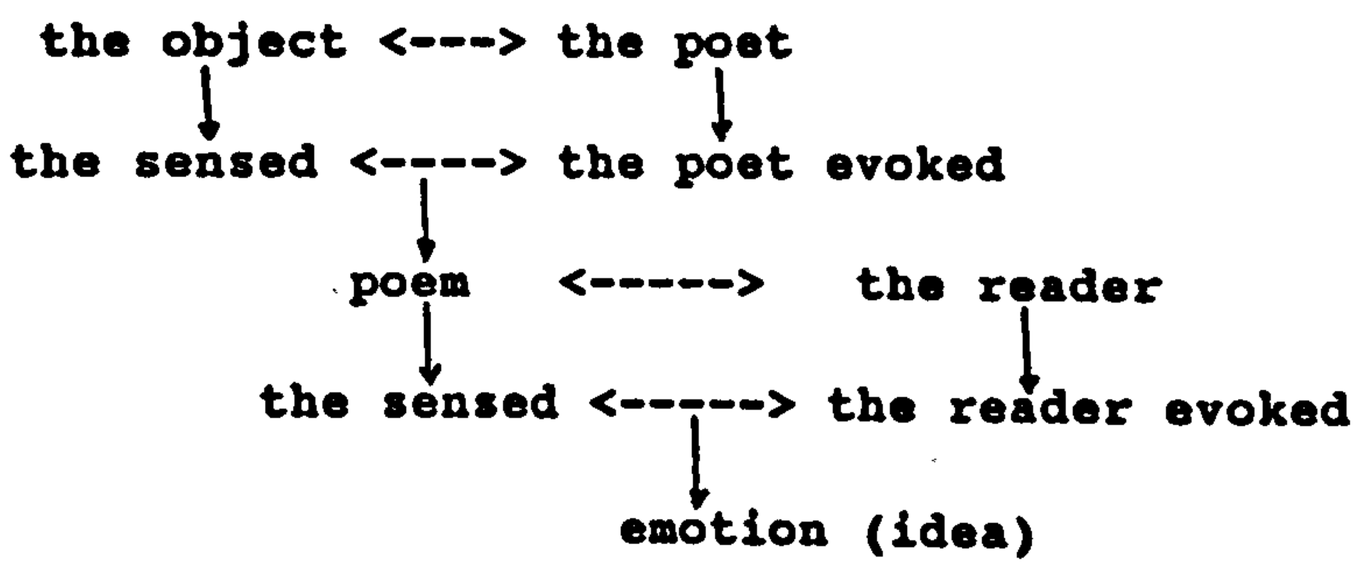
> Being connected with the body, the soul is affected through the medium of the senses - the felt. Emotions are aroused and stirred by what is sensed. Thus the sensed is the bridge, i.e. the physical relation between the immaterial (which is the artist's emotion) and the material, which results in a work of art. And again, what is sensed is the bridge from the material (the artist and his work) to the immaterial (the emotion in the soul of the observer).[65]

Thus Kandinsky uses a diagram to show the sequence:

emotion(in the artist) --> the sensed --> the art work
--> the sensed -->emotion (in the observer)[66]

This diagram clearly demonstrates how the emotion of the artist is communicated to the observer through the medium of his work. However, from a Chinese point of view, two amendments should be made so that the description will fully reflect the reality of artistic activity. First, a crucial ring in the chain seems to be missing from the diagram, namely, the preliminary phase of artistic creation - one must first be aroused emotionally before a creation process starts. In China, critics tend to explain the evocation as poet's response to his outside world,

especially, the natural world. Secondly, throughout the artistic process, which includes both artistic creation and reception, there exists an interplay between human mind and the object. In other words, the influence is mutual. It is not, as is described by Kandinsky, a one-way linear movement from the artist to the object and from the art work to the audience. Thus, Kandinsky's diagram may be modified in accordance with the Chinese theory of the *xing* to describe the process of poetic creation and appreciation:



When the object meets the eye of the poet, its appearance [*xiang*] stirs up in his mind a sensation which in turn evokes his emotion stored in the depth of his heart. Yet this initial emotion is vague and inexplicable. At the same time the object envisaged by the poet is no longer an external phenomenon completely independent of the poet's feelings, that is to say, it has become "the sensed." This is the preliminary phase of the creative process, which Liu Xie describes as *qing yi wu xing* or "emotion arising with the object," and *wu yi qing guan* or "the object being envisaged with emotion." In and through his observation and contemplation, which involves an interaction between the human mind and the sensed, the poet comes to comprehend his own emotion and has it manifested in imagery and in form. This phase is usually called imagination or *shen si* in Liu Xie's term, as the poet is no longer dealing directly with the external object but with the object as he has perceived, i.e. with the sensed or the object of the sense. "In a general way," said Longinus, "the term 'image' is used of any mental conception, ... but in current usage the word is applied to passages in which, carried away by your feelings, you imagine you are actually seeing the subject of your description, and enable your audience as well to see it."[67] Although the theory of imagination has become more

sophisticated especially since Coleridge, who distinguishes imagination from fancy,[68] its basic idea is never very far away from what Longinus says. The imagination is undoubtedly the pivotal faculty of the writer's mind. It is the power most congenial to give form to emotion: feeling changes imagination and causes it to flash forth spontaneously into images. This concept of imagination is similar to Liu Xie's concept of the *shen si*. Liu Xie mentioned two major tasks of imagination in his summary to the chapter of "Shen si." They are *ke lou sheng lu* or "to work with fastidious care on the music of the poem" and *meng ya bixing* or "to germinate the *bixing*."[69] Liu Xie also looked upon the creative process basically as a process of image-making or symbol-making. He described the process as follows:

> Through the mystic subtlety of the imagination, the spirit and the things in the outside world are one in the mind, and the key to its secret is controlled by feeling and vital force. Physical things reach our mind through our ears and eyes, and the mechanism bringing about their apprehension is rhetoric. When the key works smoothly, there is nothing which will not appear in its true form.[70]

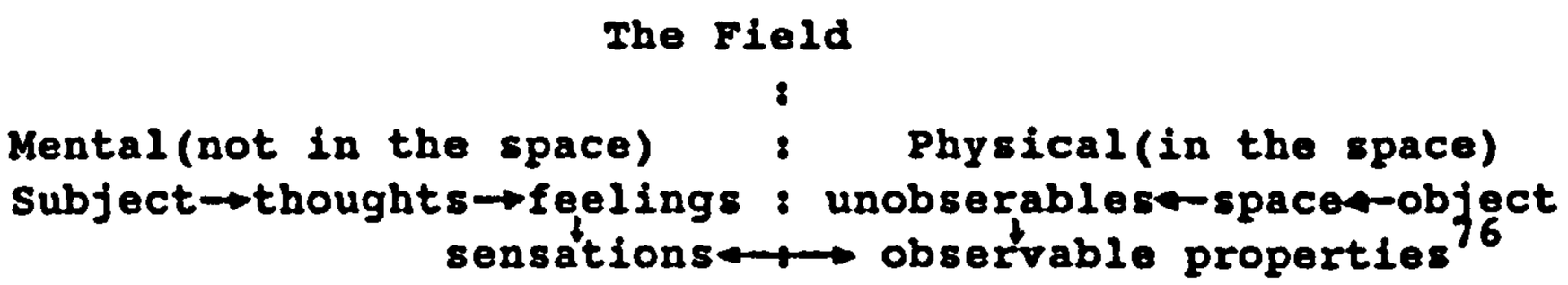
This is a typical statement of the Chinese point of view of the poetic creation. From the very beginning down to the final phase when a poem is brought into being, the interplay between the human mind and the object which includes the external phenomenon and the sensed, is going on unceasingly. And *xing* plays a key role throughout the process and its role is not, as has been suggested by some critics,[71] confined to the initial stage of the creative process. Only it plays different roles at different phases. At the beginning, it is to influence, to stir and to evoke. In the process proper, *xing* plays the role of a bridge which connects the object, the emotion, the image and the intention or meaning. It is the *xing* that pushes the creative process forward from one phase to another. For Mallarmé, poetic creation may be mainly a linguistic game, the arrangement of words. But for Liu Xie and other Chinese critics, it is a process in which human mind "cruises with the object" and the eventual fusion of the human mind and the external object.[72]

Liu Xie said, "The writer works out his words when he is emotionally moved. But the reader, on the other hand, experiences the words first, and then

works himself into an emotional state."[73] For Liu Xie poetic creation and poetic reception are two symmetrical process. The reception process also involves the interaction between human mind and the sensed. Only this time the human mind is evoked by poetic imagery in the art work instead of external objects. It is by no means a process in which the reader tries to find out and take what the poet has deposited in the poem.

John S. Mill distinguished between two kinds of poetry and two kinds of poets. In those he called "natural poets," the poetry is both inspired and nourished by emotions. According to Mill, only those are true poets who "are so constituted, that emotions are the links of associations by which their ideas, both sensuous and spiritual (i.e., mental), are connected together."[74] The prevailing associations of the poet "will be those which connect objects and ideas with emotions, and with each other through the intervention of emotions."[75] When the "natural poet" turns to composition, he will, starting with a sensation, produce a series of images connected emotionally with the sensation. In a short poem, these images will cluster around the emotion, which will give a centre to the experience portrayed and thus a unity to the poem. Mill has revealed the relationship between sensation, thought, and image, which are connected by emotion and have emotion as its centre.

Virgil Aldrich in his *Philosophy of Art* introduces a picture of "Cartesian dualism," which may help us understand the role of the *xing* in the confrontation of the subject (mind) with the object (matter).



[76]

Poets and artists in general are concerned with observable properties because only those properties are perceptible. It is not the business of art to try to get to the essence or unobservable properties of the object. Although the above diagram, based upon Cartesian dualism, draws a rigid line between the subject and the

object, it shows very clearly the relationship between the object, the feeling and the thought that lies behind the feeling and it also shows the special role played by the sensation in communicating the subject and the object. Mill pointed out that in the "true poets," "thoughts wait upon feeling."[77] Liu Xizai observed, "Either the thought is lodged in the feeling and the thought will be better expressed; or the feeling is lodged in the description of scenes and the feeling will be felt more profoundly. This is also a teaching left by the Three Hundred Poems."[78] These critics certainly agree with each other on the issue concerning the relationship between the thought, the feeling and the object.

Now we have seen that the term *xing* is capable of protean meanings - some of them overlapping at certain points (e.g. intention and meaning). Its central meaning, as has been said, is aesthetic evocation - the centre of creative activity around which feeling, imagination (image- or symbol-making), and intellect work together. The *xing* is not an equivalent of the Western concept of the symbol. It is larger than the symbol in its connotation. However, so far as it bears the senses of evocation, emotion, image, idea, and meaning beyond words in various contexts, it plays a role approximately the same as the symbol. Hence the theory of the *xing* and the *bixing* is very comparable with the theory of symbol and symbolism.

4.4 Early Chinese Ideas of Symbolism

The Chinese equivalent of the Western term "symbol" is *xiangzhen* 象徵, which is relatively a recent expression. In the *Ci yuan*, or the *Dictionary of the Classical Chinese Language*, compiled in the first half of this century, the word *xiangzhen* is not listed as an entry. It may probably be a translation of the word "symbol" in the Western language. This does not mean, however, in pre-Modern Chinese literary history, there was no such concept as the symbol. In fact this translation itself is based on the ancient Chinese theory of symbol and symbolism.

Wang Bi (or Wang Pi, 226-249), a Chinese philosopher of the Wei dynasty (220-265), in his essay "Zhou yi lue li," made the following comments:

> Hence, the *xiang* is established to express ideas exhaustively and it can be forgotten once the ideas are expressed; a picture is drawn to express feelings exhaustively and it can be forgotten once the feelings are expressed. So, on contact with the (right) category (of things), one may get the *xiang*; and in conformity with the (right) meaning, one may have the *zhen*.[79]

Take the last words of the last two sentences and put them together, we have the term *xiangzhen*. The text on which Wang Bi made the comment is from the *Book of Changes*:

> The Master (Confucius) said: Writing cannot express words exhaustively, words cannot express ideas exhaustively.
> Are we then unable to see the thoughts of the holy Sages?
> The Master said: The holy sages set up the images in order to express their thoughts completely; they devised the hexagrams in order to express the true and the false completely.[80]

One of the Sages is the legendary King Bao Xi (or Pao Hsi), who is said to have invented the eight trigrams by imitating or, rather, representing the *xiang* (images) of the Universe. In the *Book of Changes*, it is recorded:

> When in early antiquity Pao Hsi ruled the world, he looked upward and contemplated the images [*xiang*, 象] in the heavens; he looked downward and contemplated the patterns [*wen* 文] on earth. He contemplated the markings of birds and beasts and the adaptations to the regions. He proceeded directly from himself and indirectly from objects. Thus he invented the eight trigrams in order to enter into connection with the virtues of the light of the gods and to regulate the conditions of all beings.[81]

Here the *xiang* has two basic meanings: the appearance or image of the object in the universe and the iconic sign in the *Book of Changes* which is established to express ideas.

Then in Lao Zi's (or Lao Tsu's) *Dao de jing* (or *Tao te ching*) we have these words,

> And Tao is a thing, elusive, evasive.
> Evasive, elusive,
> Yet within it there is the *xiang*.
> Elusive , evasive,
> Yet within it there is substance,

Dark and dim,
Yet within it there is vitality (of the *qi*);
Its vitality is very real;
Within it there is trust.[82]

Tao is elusive and infinite. It cannot be stated, as Lao Zi says at the beginning of his book. However, Tao has its embodiment in the *xiang*, the *wu* (or substance), and in the *jing* (or vitality). It is therefore apprehensible through its *xiang*, its substance and its vital force. Here the *xiang* still retains its basic meaning of image but has added a transcendental connotation.[83]

After Lao Zi, Zhuang Zi (or Chuang Tsu), another great Taoist philosopher, has left us a fable:

> The Yellow Emperor [Huang Di] travelled to the north of the Red River, ascended the Kunlun Mountains and looked toward the south. On his return, he lost the black/mysterious pearl. He ordered Intellect to find it, but without success. He ordered Sight to find it, but without success. He ordered Speech to find it, but without success. Finally he gave the order to *Xiangwan* and *Xiangwan* succeeded.[84]

The black pearl is a symbol of the mysterious Tao. According to Zhuang Zi, Tao is not obtainable through intellect or reason; nor can it be apprehended through senses; nor is it attainable through language or speech. But it can be reached by the *xiangwan*. What is the *xiangwan*? "Xiang" is image and "wan" means net or mesh. *Xiangwan* means a net of image or, in Cassirer's term, "the symbolic net"[85]. In a net there are strings and there are openings. If there were no strings, there would have been no net at all; but if there were only strings without holes, the net would not be able to catch any fish or birds. Therefore a net is a combination of what is and what is not. Lu Huiqing noted, "*Xiang* represents Being; *wan* represents non-Being. *Xiangwan* is neither luminous nor obscure and therefore is able to get the pearl."[86] He actually touched on the essence of the symbol, which is the unity of the opposites. Zhong Baihua explained, "Neither what is, nor what is not; neither luminous; nor obscure - this represents the symbolic function of the artistic form. 'Xiang' is the vista while 'wan' is illusion. The artist creates illusory vista to symbolize the truth of the universe and human life. Truth shines within the artistic

form as the black pearl glimmers inside the *xiangwan*."[87] He explicitly asserted that *xiangwan* is the equivalent of the symbolic.

However *xiangwan* has not been used as an equivalent of the symbol. In fact, it has not become a term of literary criticism at all. The reasons, I would suggest, are, on the one hand, it has always been taken strictly as a philosophical term denoting a concept in epistemology and on the other hand, since the Han dynasty, Confucian theory of literature has in the most of the time occupied the dominant position in Chinese literary history. The Confucian scholars of the Han dynasty inherited from Confucius the notion of the *xing* and did not perhaps feel the need for any other terms in this respect and in my view, "xing" has at least one advantage over the others including the *xiangwan* in that it by its very nature emphasizes the evocative power and effect of poetic imagery and poetic work as a whole. Thus the *xing* or sometimes the *bixing* plays approximately the same role as the symbol in the Western literary theory. In order to have a better understanding of the theory of the *xing* and *bixing*, we need a comparative study with its counterpart in the Western tradition - the theory of the symbol and symbolism.

II. Meaning of Symbolism

5. Symbolism in the Western Tradition

Symbolism is a difficult word. Paul Valéry, a prominent symbolist, expressed his great dissatisfaction with the word and the way in which the word had been used when he said, "This poor word symbol only contains that which one wishes it to contain;..." and "The very term *Symbolism* is already an enigma to many people. It seems to have been created in order to torment human minds..."[1] The problem concerning the symbol and symbolism has been so complicated and confusing that John Senior proclaims in his book *The Way Down and Out*, " the question just what symbolism is, is one of the most difficult of our age."[2] René Wellek suggests that we should not be concerned with symbolism in general, because, as Ernest Jones says, "If the word 'symbolism' is taken in its widest sense the subject is seen to comprise almost the whole development of civilization,"[3] and he also advises that the attempt to give symbolism a "real" definition has to be given up; instead, he suggests that we "distinguish meanings that widen almost like concentric circles":

> The most narrow is that of a coterie, a group, or possibly a school in Paris in the eighteen-eighties and -nineties. More widely, Symbolism represents a trend in French poetry which we can trace back at least as far as Nerval and Lautreamount and follow at least as far as Claudel and Valéry. Its meaning was soon extended to prose and drama, and then, more broadly, we can speak of Symbolism as a European movement (and its offshoots in the Americas), and finally, though I wish to discourage such a use, we can think of symbolism as a recurring type of art spreading all over the history of literature.[4]

Thus, Wellek solicits us to follow him in his move to these premises and to allow ourselves to be locked into them. But I would rather not and prefer to take a different road.

Although "symbolism" was made a household word by a group of French poets, it would not be exact, as Bowra has noted, to apply this term as a special label for these poets.[5] Nor is it desirable to do so, because symbolism in its traditional sense may not be a property of the poetry of those French poets. Susan Sontag puts it bluntly that to call the French movement symbolism is "misleading."[6] Fowlie even expresses his doubt as to whether a symbolist school ever existed in France.[7]

The second circle, which defines symbolism as "a broad movement in France" from Nerval to Valéry, has the merit in bringing out the whole scope of this particular French movement. However, it fails to go far enough to reveal the true origin of this movement. For it must be pointed out that the philosophy of the symbolist movement was not in the main a French product, but was imported from Germany, England and America. Nor was the movement a unique French phenomenon, for a similar movement had taken place in the United States even earlier.[8]

The third circle which defines symbolism as a European or international movement "roughly between 1885 to 1914"[9] would serve satisfactorily in characterizing literary trends in a particular historical period, but would be of little help in delineating symbolism as a special way of writing.

As to the largest circle in which the word represents "the use of 'symbolism' in all literature, of all ages,"[10] Wellek himself discourages the use, and I would think it is too general to have any real practical sense. Although it is a fact that symbols and emblems had already been used in large quantities in literature and other arts, it came into a new prominence in the romantic period.[11] The systematic

use of the symbol and, especially, the theoretical study of symbolism began to be seen only after the emergence of romantic poets and romantic thinkers.

With the time-honoured Chinese theory of the *xing* and the *bixing* as reference, I would suggest that symbolism should be taken as a general name for certain literary tendencies which have been formulated over a long time in history. It represents in a concentrated way the viewpoints of those authors and critics who seek to delineate the distinguishing features of literature, especially poetry, in comparison with non-literary writings. And it is in Romanticism that we clearly see the first sign of these tendencies. Both Wellek and Wilson believe that French symbolism is a resurgent second phase of the romantic movement.[12] Henri Peyre describes symbolism as "the continuator of romanticism."[13] Geofrey Thurley asserts that "the tendency towards the pure Symbolist or Imagist poem is inherent in Romanticism itself, and that the most significant feature of Romantic poetry is precisely its use of imagery as symbolic..."[14] John Senior also says in this context that "historically, symbolism was an arc within the great curve of romanticism."[15]

Thus, we may have had strong reasons to observe the trend of symbolism in the Western world within its great tradition of Romanticism. In fact, the study of symbolism in the West as a literary and aesthetic theory was initiated and boosted at various stages by romantic thinkers and critics and, first and foremost, by German philosophers, such as Kant, Goethe, Schelling and the Schlegel brothers.

Kant (1724-1804) launched the "Copernican revolution" in philosophy and declared that imagination was the common "unknown root" of apprehension and feeling. Hegel commented that Kant's critique "constitutes the starting point for the true comprehension of the beauty of art."[16] His contribution to the idea of symbolism may be seen in his rejection of the "modern logician's (i.e., Leibniz's) use of the word in opposition to "intuitive representation." He maintains that "symbolic representation is only a kind of intuitive representation," and symbols are an "indirect representation of the concept through the medium of analogy."[17] Thanks to his connection of symbol with intuitive representation, symbol in Kant is

no longer a mere sign of conception but is conferred with full aesthetic value and significance. Here Kant distinguishes two kinds of intuitive modes of representation: the schematic and the symbolic. The former is a direct representation of concept by means of demonstration; the latter is an indirect representation by means of analogy, "enabling the expression in question to contain not the proper schema for the concept, but merely a symbol for reflection." Hence, in symbolism a concept is reached indirectly through reflection upon the symbol, an object of intuition. Thus, symbolic representation invariably involves interpretation. Kant then sets forth the famous proposition that "the beautiful is the symbol of the morally good." This is very similar to Confucius's maxim that "the wise find pleasure in water; the virtuous find pleasure in hills."[18] Both equate the beautiful with the good, or to be more exact, both look upon the beautiful as symbols of the morally good. Since Kant insists that symbolic representation is based on analogy, one would naturally ask where the analogy lies between the beautiful and the morally good, between the mountain and the virtuous, the water and the wise. Kant contends that there are four aspects in which they are analogous as well as different at the same time: Each involves a kind (but a different kind) of autonomy, gives a kind (but a different kind) of immediate and disinterested pleasure, each exhibits a kind of freedom (but each a different kind) and each is concerned with universality (but a different kind of universality).[19] The central point remains, in my view, that they both please and give pleasure of an analogous quality. Thus Kant has defined symbol as the medium of the beautiful and the morally good, and pointed out that the symbol provides an object for reflection and represents the conceptual in a sensual form.

5.1 Goethe and Coleridge

However, as Gadamer has noted, "It is only in the correspondence between Schiller and Goethe (1749-1832) that we have the beginnings of the new form of the concept of symbol."[20] This concept of symbol is new in two senses: on the one hand, they believe that symbols should arise in an experience of reality rather than in aesthetic experience; on the other hand, their concept of symbol, as Gadamer puts it, is a "counter-concept" to allegory.

In his letter to Schiller, Goethe describes the sentimental mood which his impressions of Frankfurt arouse in him, and says of the objects that induce this "that they are properly symbolic," because "they are eminent examples which stand, in a characteristic multiplicity, as representatives for many others, and embrace a certain totality..."[21] For Goethe, the symbol is essentially synecdochic: a part of a person's life is symbolic of his whole life and the life of an individual is symbolic of the whole society. Goethe once said to Eckermann (May 2, 1824): "I have always looked upon my actions and my accomplishments as purely symbolic, and, in the end, it is all the same to me whether I make jugs or porridge bowls." His experience in Frankfurt and the objects he came across are to him "properly symbolic." This helps to explain the fact that his poems are largely autobiographical as they were written in the sentimental mood which his experience of reality aroused in him. Yet his recognition of the symbol is not confined to his personal experience. "Everything that takes place is a symbol, and, in fully representing itself, it points towards everything else."[22] This kind of symbolism in which a portion of reality is used to symbolize "everything else" apparently differs from the later French *symbolisme*, especially Mallarmé's *symbolisme*, in which the existing

reality is as a rule put aside and a new, hitherto non-existing reality is created to evoke a significant *néant.*

Therefore, it seems likely that in Goethe's symbolism, unlike in that of Kant, analogy or resemblance as the basis of symbol is to be replaced by contiguity. In other words, resemblance is no longer a necessity in symbolism. There could be "a poetry without figures of speech which is itself a single figure of speech."[23] In such a case, the problem of the symbol has shifted its centre from "symbols in art" to "art as symbol."

Like Kant, Goethe did not take the symbol as a mere cipher for an abstract idea, but rather something in which reality resides. He said,

> In a true symbol the particular represents the universal, not as a dream or shadow, but as the living and instantaneous revelation of the unfathomable.[24]

In a symbol, there is the particular and the universal; there is something real and organic ("living"), something concrete ("not like a dream or shadow") and something abstract, transcendental, and perhaps mysterious (unfathomable). The particular represents the universal as "the living and instantaneous revelation of the unfathomable." It is an "instantaneous revelation," because symbolic representation is an intuitive representation. It is "living," because it is a part of an organic whole, rather than something taken from something else which is irrelevant. It is the revelation of the unfathomable" which is approachable through what is itself unfathomable, "and the only truly unfathomable faculty of man is love."[25] Here lies some difference between Kant and Goethe. For Kant, the symbol is something beautiful representing indirectly an abstract idea (e.g., morality). For Goethe, the symbol is something living that reveals instantaneously an abstract idea (e.g., truth) through the faculty of man. In Kant, the idea is reached by reflection; in Goethe, the idea is laid bare through feeling (e.g., love). It seems to me that Goethe's symbol comes closer to the essence of the literary symbol if there is such an essence.

Goethe repeatedly emphasizes the word "living," because his theory of symbolism springs from his organic notion of nature which is in opposition to Newtonian mechanism. Newtonian mechanism views the world as a vast machine, "one huge, dead, immeasurable steam-engine, rolling on, in its dead indifference, to grind me limb from limb."[26] By contrast, Goethe regards nature as a living thing, an organic unity and he looks upon art as he looks upon nature. For him, the highest works of art, "like the highest works of nature, were produced by men according to true and natural laws. Everything arbitrary, fanciful, falls together: here is necessity, here is God."[27] For Goethe, God, or the Great One, is equal to nature and can be known to the human mind only fleetingly as revealed in particular natural objects or events. He writes, "Let no man look for anything back of the phenomena. They are themselves the teaching."[28] Goethe believes that the art object, the poem, is no mere imitation or reflection of nature, but is itself a living thing,[29] containing the same symbolic power of revealing the Universal as natural objects. Thus Goethe concludes his *Faust*:

> Alles Vergangliche ist nur ein Gleichnis.
> (Everything mortal is merely symbolic.)

Goethe's organic theory underlies his distinction between symbol and allegory and his preference for symbol at the expense of allegory. Goethe writes,

> It makes a great difference whether the poet starts with a universal idea and then looks for suitable particulars or beholds the universal in the particular. The former method produces allegory, where the particular has status merely as an instance, an example [i.e., as a "type"] of the universal. The latter, by contrast, is what reveals poetry in its true nature; it speaks forth a particular without independently thinking of or referring to a universal, but in grasping the particular in its living character it implicitly apprehends the universal along with it.[30]

Goethe was the first in modern history to make such a distinction between symbol and allegory. His is the beginning of a rather long tradition which has continued until recently, when it has been seriously challenged. In the above-quoted

passage, Goethe has not used the word symbol, but we know he means it. For on another occasion, as we have already quoted, he contrasted allegory with "true symbol" in which the particular represents the universal as a living revelation. It seems that Goethe discusses the distinction by treating symbol and allegory as two modes of writing. It does not matter whether individual symbols are used or not. It is the way of writing or the attitude towards literary creation that counts here. If one puts the universal before the particular, one will end up in allegory; conversely, if one concentrates on the particular, not trying to express the universal, one will arrive at the true symbol. It seems that all are very clear. Yet the question might be: if one has no intention whatsoever of expressing the universal, how can one be sure that his art will reveal the universal? The answer would be: either the particular always embodies the universal in accordance with the law of universal analogy or correspondence or the revelation of the universal is not an objective of the writer but the result of the reader's reading. Therefore, symbolism invariably involves interpretation and the symbolic meaning is not something stored by the author in the work but something that has to be revealed through interpretation. Or, to use Kant's term, the symbol only provides an object (which is obtained intuitively) for reflection, and the universal cannot but be the result of reflection.

Kant's and Goethe's ideas of symbolism were shared by their fellow-countrymen, such as Schiller, the Schlegel brothers and especially Schelling, who exerted great influence on Coleridge and other British critics.[31]

Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834) took the organic concept from the German philosophers and developed a theory of organic form in poetry. His ideas of symbolism operate within the framework of this theory. Coleridge wrote in his *Shakespearian Lectures of 1818*:

> The form is mechanic when on any given material we impress a pre-determined form, not necessarily arising out of the properties of the material - as when to a mass of wet clay we give whatever shape we wish it to retain when hardened. The organic form, on the other hand, is innate; it shapes, as it develops, itself from within, and the fullness of its development is one and

> the same with the perfection of its outward form. Such as the life is, such is the form.

In the West, the dichotomy of form and content has always been a presupposition in literary studies. Language is subservient to some idea, intention or referent that exists outside it. It is the instrument, the medium, the vehicle and the container. Content seems to exist independently of the medium in which it is formulated. Like wine, it is ready to be put into bottles of any shape as the author pleases. Yet here in Coleridge, the conceptual opposition between content and form is only partly valid. Only in what he calls the mechanic form, the dichotomy is retained. In what he calls the "organic form," the dichotomy has been obliterated. The difference between the mechanic and organic forms, we hardly need to prove, corresponds to the difference between allegory and symbolism. Coleridge's distinction between symbol and allegory is as follows:

> The Symbolical cannot perhaps be better defined in distinction from the Allegorical, than that it is always itself a part of that, of the whole of which it is representative. "Here comes a sail," (that is a ship) is a symbolical expression. "Behold our lion!" when we speak of some gallant soldier, is allegorical. Of most importance to our present subject is this point, that the latter (allegory) cannot be other than spoken consciously - whereas in the former (the symbol) it is very possible that the general truth may be unconsciously in the writer's mind during the construction of the symbol; and it proves itself by being produced out of his own mind - as the Don Quixote out of the perfectly sane mind of Cervantes, and not by outward observation or historically. The advantage of symbolic writing over allegory is, that it presumes no disjunction of faculties, but simple dominance.[32]

This is an excellent description of the idealist way of poetic creation. Following Goethe closely, Coleridge here describes "the Symbolic" as synecdochic. The basic meaning of the synecdochic as a mode of thought is to seek the universal in the particular, to understand the whole through the examination of a part.

A sail can be representative of a ship because a sail is part of the ship. The symbol is given immediately in the act of perceiving the ship and it is a part of the perceiver's experience. A symbol always partakes of the reality which it renders

intelligible. By contrast, in allegory, one does not see the immediacy between the perception and the expression. The expression is not a part of experience. "Behold our lion!" cannot be a part of reality, because if it were, it would be a statement of a fact rather than an allegory. In allegory, one expresses what one thinks. One has an idea in advance and then clothes it with a concrete form. What can be seen in the process is a simple replacement accomplished through the mediation of intellect. In the symbol, according to Coleridge, one expresses what one sees or, in a Chinese phrase, "what meets one's eyes." Before the symbol is constructed, the general truth lies unconsciously in the writer's mind until it is finally produced. The process of creation is identical to the process of symbol-making. As a consequence, the allegory involves two kinds of faculty - the faculty of senses and the faculty of intellect, and they operate separately. Hence, the disjunction of faculties. In the symbol, the writer concentrates on the particular, the sensuous world. So there is "no disjunction of faculties, but simple dominance."

Coleridge discussed the symbol in distinction from allegory on the level of creative process and aesthetic quality. He described the faculty of imagination as the symbol-making faculty that possesses a synthetic and magical power. It is a "reconciling and mediatory power, which incorporating the Reason in Images of the Sense, and organizing (as it were) the flux of the Senses by the permanence and self-circling energies of the Reason, gives birth to a system of symbols, harmonious in themselves, and consubstantial with the truths of which they are the *conductors*."[33] He came to the conclusion that symbolism is superior to allegory. Thus he asserted, "An idea, in the *highest* sense of that word, cannot be conveyed but by a symbol; and, except in geometry, all symbols of necessity involve an apparent contradiction."[34] The contradiction, as we may understand, consists in the antithesis between the part and the whole, the particular and the universal, the special and the general, the temporal and the eternal, as Coleridge explained on another occasion.[35] And this intrinsic contradiction in the symbol was later reiterated by Carlyle.

5.2 Carlyle and Emerson

More than twenty years younger than Coleridge and equally influenced by German idealist thinkers was Thomas Carlyle (1795 - 1881), who devoted one of the chapters of his remarkable book *Sartor Resartus* (1833-34) to the discussion of symbol and symbolism, which is particularly relevant in our present context, for it has affinities with the theories of symbolism in literature on both sides of the Atlantic ocean. Carlyle was considered as the precursor of the American Transcendentalists and, during the French symbolist movement of the 1880s and after, he was more often quoted than his German contemporaries, while French thinkers were rarely invoked.[36] In Britain, Carlyle's contribution to the shaping of the theory of symbolism is also significant. Arthur Symons defined Symbolism according to his theory.[37]

Carlyle believed that the world is full of symbols, that man is encompassed with symbols and, in fact, "the Universe is but one vast Symbol of God."[38]

In such a world, "it is in and through Symbols that man, consciously or unconsciously, lives, works and has his being..." People would even fight to the death for symbols: "Five-hundred living soldiers sabred into crows'-meat for a piece of glazed cotton, which they called their Flag." To anyone who "has eyes for it," a symbol is "some dimmer or clearer revelation of the Godlike."[39]

What can we make out of these words? First, the theory of oneness of the universe apprehended in moments of mystical union with the Great One, a theory which is as old as Plotinus and may trace back to Plato, yet nonetheless discovered afresh by German thinkers. Carlyle's concept, however, is not completely a faithful translation of German theory. German thinkers such as Goethe and Schelling had strong pantheist tendencies. For them, God or the Great One, is equal to nature or part of nature. Goethe wrote,

Did not the eye partake of sun,
Sun would be darkness to our seeing;
No splendour could from the divine be won
Were God not part of mortal being.[40]

God can be known to the human mind just because He is "part of mortal being."

There is in this view no transcendental realm of the idea which lies somewhere beyond; nature itself is the final fact. So Goethe advised not to look for anything back of the phenomena. "They are themselves the teaching."[41] For Carlyle, God remains transcendental. The world is sacramental in the sense of being symbolic of supernatural reality. While Christ is the highest poet, "the Poet and inspired Maker" can also be called "Pontiff of the world;" for the Poet, "Prometheus-like, can shape new Symbols, and bring new Fire from Heaven to fix it there."[42] For Carlyle, poetry has great creative power and the Poet *Vates*, a prophet or seer into "the Divine Idea of the World"; to see is also to create, "poetic creation, what is this but *seeing* the thing sufficiently?"[43]

Symbols may have two kinds of value: extrinsic and intrinsic. Symbols of extrinsic value have acquired an extrinsic significance. They are of an accidental nature. Symbols under this category are "Coats-of-Arms," "military Banners," and generally all national or other sectarian Costumes and Customs," through which there "glimmers something of a Divine Idea." So what he means by symbols of extrinsic value are mostly conventional emblems, which usually stand for something definite. They themselves are often not particularly important. It is what they stand for that counts most.

Symbols of an intrinsic value have an intrinsic meaning. "All true Works of Art," Carlyle wrote, are symbols of the sort, in which one will "discern Eternity looking through Time; the Godlike rendered visible."[44] Here Carlyle introduces the discussion of the nature of the symbol. German idealist philosophy, especially Hegelian dialectics, provide us with a view of the world as one divided into two, which are at once united and opposite to each other. And the world is said to be

propelled by the great generative power of the opposites - "Without Contraries is no progression." This principle was applied to the study of the symbol. Before Carlyle, Coleridge had claimed that "a symbol ... is characterized by a translucence of the special in the individual, or the general in the special, or of the universal in the general; above all by the translucence of the eternal through and in the temporal."[45] He actually described the symbol as consisting of many contradictions. Yet it is in Carlyle that we find a more penetrating dialectic analysis of the nature of the symbol. He wrote,

> In a Symbol there is concealment and yet revelation: here therefore, by Silence and by Speech acting together, comes a double significance.[46]

The symbol is of course speech; but speech itself is not good enough, for it is "stifling and suspending thought, so that there is none to conceal." Symbol is the combination of speech and silence and when they act together, symbol has a double significance: one is present and the other is absent; one is literal and the other is symbolic.

Since "Speech is of Time, Silence is of Eternity," it follows that symbols are also a combination of temporality and eternity, or to be more exact, the symbol partakes of eternity through and in temporality. What is present is temporal and what is absent is eternal.

Symbol is also the combination of the infinite and the finite. Carlyle said,

> In the Symbol proper, what we can call a symbol, there is ever, more or less distinctly and directly, some embodiment and revelation of the Infinite; the Infinite is made to blend itself with the Finite, to stand visible, and as it were, attainable there.[47]

And here we have another antithesis: the visible and the invisible. What is visible is attainable and finite. What is invisible is not directly attainable (i.e. perceivable)

and is embodied in and revealed by the visible. Yet these two opposites, Carlyle emphasizes, are not separable: They are made to blend with each other.

Thus, Carlyle made a profound analysis of the essence of the symbol. He described the hallmarks of the symbol by listing a series of parallel opposites, of which the most important ones, in my view, seem to be the antithesis of speech and silence. Poems are made of words. In a poem one cannot do without speech. But as Carlyle said, speech alone is not good enough. Paradoxically, speech, instead of expressing thought, will stifle and suspend thought. If a poem is to be successful, it has to allow silence to join in. This means that one should not exhaust what one intends to express; rather, he should, as Pater said, "Leave something to the willing intelligence of the reader."[48]

The American critic R. W. Emerson (1803-1882), a contemporary of Thomas Carlyle, has been considered one of the forerunners of the conception of literature as symbolic form[49] and "the outstanding representation of romantic symbolism in the English-speaking world," who "expounds a most extensive symbolist theory of poetry."[50] No discussion of the Western tradition of symbolism would therefore be sufficient without at least a cursory examination of Emerson's theory of symbolism.

Emerson drew heavily on Emanuel Swedenborg, the Swedish philosopher, and Goethe and other German thinkers. He was a follower of Coleridge, admired and had correspondence with Carlyle whose *Sartor Resartus* he read closely and praised as "a philosophical poem"[51].

It is not easy to put one's finger on Emerson's originality; for, in his writings, he often echoes his predecessors without acknowledgement but with more or less different language while making his own contributions. We might say that his originality appears sporadically like sparks rather than like a steady beam of light. His theory of symbolism seems to be based on his conception of the universe and his idea of the relationship between language and poetry.

In his essay "The Poet," Emerson uses concepts of language and words in a broad sense. "Words are also actions, and actions are a kind of word."[52] "Nature offers all her creatures to him (the poet) as a picture language" (p.8). The poet is " the namer or language maker" (p.13). He made all the words. "Every word was once a poem," (p.11). and "Language is fossil poetry" (p.13). Wellek suggested that Emerson's view "appealed to Vico and would have appealed to Croce."[53] And I would suggest that Emerson might have had a more convenient source in Shelley, who, in his essay *A Defence of Poetry* which was published in 1840, i.e. four years before Emerson's own essay, had expressed a similar idea.[54] And this idea of the poet as the namer and language maker found its most articulate expression in what H.W Garrod said, "Once upon a time the world was fresh, to speak was to be a poet, to name objects an inspiration; and metaphor dropped from the inventive mouths of men like some natural exudation of the vivified senses."[55]

Speaking of the Romantic movement, Abrams asserts that "the general tendency was, in diverse degrees and ways, to naturalize the supernatural and to humanize the divine."[56] Abrams's generalization also applies to Emerson although, strictly speaking, he was not a romanticist. Emerson's concept of the universe is basically neo-Platonic. As Wellek has described, "It is an emanistic pantheism - modernized, however, by a certain fluidity and imaginative freedom opposed to literal mysticism and scholastic rigidity."[57] Emerson says, "The universe is the externalization of the soul" (p.9). And he makes it clear that "it is nature the symbol, nature certifying the supernatural, body overflowed by life which he worships, with coarse, but sincere rites" (p.10). In such a universe, to such a poet, "nature is a symbol, in the whole and in every part" (p.8). "Nothing walks, or creeps, or grows, or exists which must not in turn arise and walk before him as exponent of his meaning" (p.23). That means that everything in the universe is in essence a symbol. Things artificial such as the factory, village and the railways "fall within the great Order not less than the bee hive or the spider's geometrical web" (p.11). Even human beings themselves, their actions and experiences are all

symbols: "We are symbols and inhabit symbols; workmen, work, and tools, words and things, birth and death, are all emblems...." (p.12). "Every line we can draw in the sand has expression" (p.8). In the Chain of Being, nothing is too small or too mean to be a symbol: "Small or mean things serve as well as great symbols. The meaner the type by which a law is expressed, the more pungent it is, and the more lasting in the memories of men. Likewise, in the human world, "even the poorest experience is rich enough for all the purpose of expressing thought" (p.11).

Thought, according to Emerson, has stability and independence of the symbol; whereas the symbol is of accidency and fugacity (p.12). This thought-symbol relation makes it possible that the same thought can be expressed by different symbolic objects and the same objects can be used to symbolize different thoughts. The poet should not stop at the appearance of the objects but "read their meanings;" neither should he stick to one meaning, but "make the same objects exponents of his new thought." Unlike the mystic who nails a symbol to one sense, the poet allows the same symbol to have different meanings to different people. The redness of morning , for example, can stand for "truth and faith" to one reader, yet can also be symbolic of "a mother and a child" to another reader, or "a gardener and his bulb," or "a jeweller polishing a gem," or a myriad more of others. So far as the reader can read meanings into them, they are equally good. The essence of language is "vehicular and transitive." The quality of imagination is "to flow, and not to freeze." All symbols are "fluxional." This concept of symbol is full of modern sense. Here Emerson makes a distinction between the mystic and poetic symbols. The former is "tedious," "trite rhetoric," whereas the latter is as versatile as algebra; the former is "too stark and solid," whereas the latter is fluid and polysemous (p.20). The central identity enables any one symbol to express successively all the qualities and shades of real being. "In the transmission of heavenly waters, every hose fits every hydrant."[58]

The poet does not have to search for novel symbols. "Why covet a knowledge of new facts?" Emerson asked. "We are far from having exhausted the

significance of the few symbols we use" (p.11) An ancient Chinese poet said, "Though the sun and the moon are seen every day, their looks are always new."[59] Heraclitus also said that the Sun is new every day.[60] It is of course not the external objects that are always new; it is the poet's feeling for the objects and his sensibility that are continually being renewed. Every new feeling leads to a new relation of man and his world. Every new relation is a new word and gives rise to new significance. Emerson wrote, "Day and night, house and garden, a few books, a few actions, serve as well as would all trades and all spectacles" (p.11). His concept of the symbol is by no means confined to a few objects such as a cross, a swan or a rose. His dictionary of symbols includes virtually everything in the universe: man, his actions and the world around him.

Emerson contends that symbolism works through incessant metamorphosis and universal convertibility. One can call the world any name he likes and "swifter than light the world converts itself into that thing you name... Call it a blossom, a rod, a wreath of parsley... the ear instantly hears and spirit leaps to the trope."[61] The metamorphosis excites the poet and other men alike. "Every thought is a prison." However, the use of symbols has a certain power of emancipation and exhilaration for all men. "The poet unlocks our chains and admits us to a new scene. We seem to be touched by a wand which makes us dance and run about happily like children." We have acquired a new sense and found within our world another world. Poets are thus "liberating gods" (pp.17-18).

Though all men are potentially capable of understanding the symbols, only poets can originally use them and they can give them "a power which makes their old use forgotten, and puts eyes and a tongue into every dumb and inanimate object." Here we see that Emerson believes that the poet has the power to motivate language, a point to which later Symbolists such as Mallarmé pay much attention. To the poet, symbols are also thoughts. The poet is a seer, who sees meanings beyond the sensuous world. "As the eyes of Lyncaeus were said to see through the earth, so the poet turns the world to glass, and shows us all things in their right

series and procession" (p.12). This brings us back to Coleridge and his famous statement that "a symbol ... is characterized by a translucence of the eternal through and in the temporal."

The poet is superior to scientists, Emerson argues. "The poet alone knows astronomy, chemistry, vegetation and animation, for he does not stop at these facts, but employs them as signs..." (p.13). And for what? To attain the transcendental, because "nothing is of any value in books excepting the transcendental and extraordinary" (p.19).

Emerson's speculations on the symbol and language are very interesting and highly valuable when considered in the framework of the historical formation of modern theories of the symbol and language. For him poets are liberating gods, who exercise the liberating power through imagination and by means of symbols, as the use of symbols has a power of emancipation. The faculty of emancipation operates in two directions. On the one hand, the poet, as a seer, has new thoughts and new experiences to unfold. He has the power to liberate men from the imprisonment of old traditional thought, leads them out of the cave to the open air and helps them "find a world within their world." On the other hand, the poet, as a namer and language maker, has the power to liberate the language from its traditional use. Traditionally, Emerson argues, language is the homestead of thought. A thing has a fixed name and a thought has a fixed expression. For Emerson and his ideal poet, however, language is vehicular and transitive and, as ferries and horses, good for conveyance. Emerson is here challenging the traditional concept of language and symbol. He is proposing to break the rigid linkage between language and thought, to write off their one-to-one correspondence, and to motivate language so that it will turn into a system of "universal signs," in which anything named by the poet will be able to stand for a myriad of things. It seems to me that what Emerson proposes to do is, much like the later French Symbolists, to release the language from the chain of reference and representation. But unlike the French Symbolists and the recent Structuralists, he is not advocating what has been called

linguistic nihilism. On the contrary, he seems to have gone to the other extremity and implied that language should be universally referential and representational. Both French Symbolists and Structuralists have advocated a so-called "new language" which represents and refers to nothing. While French Symbolists, like Emerson, maintain that it is the poet's business to liberate the language, the Structuralists have asserted that the language by nature is non-referential and non-representational.[62]

Thus, for Emerson, the poets are the seers, the namers and language makers. They are liberating gods; they are "free and they make free" (p.18). Emerson is here describing an ideal poet. Of all the qualities he must possess, the most important one is the ability to read and make symbols. Such a poet however is rare according to Emerson's criteria. He says, not without regret, "I look in vain for the poet whom I describe." Even such first-class poets as Milton and Homer are not quite up to the standard: "Milton is too literary, and Homer too literal and historical" (p.22).

5.3 Poe and Baudelaire

E. A. Poe (1809-1849) has been considered by some critics as a precursor of symbolism or a symbolist writer. But others, such as Wellek, think he is "in no way symbolist."[63] This is no place to argue whether he is a symbolist or not. Since his theories of poetry had an enormous influence on the French symbolists and the symbolist movement, they deserve a discussion.

It seems to me that although Anglo-American critics in general have made a great deal of insightful studies into Poe's aesthetic theory, its true value remains yet to be recognized or re-estimated. Perhaps it is understandable that there exists some sort of bias towards Poe's theory. It has been seen that when critics try to ex-

plain its undeniable significant influence upon the French symbolists, they would suggest that the Frenchmen overrated Poe because of their imperfect knowledge of English and English literature.[64] This, of course, may be partly true. But one would also think if it is exactly for the same reason that those Frenchmen were able, as some Anglo-American critics were unable, to get right to the bottom of Poe's theories and immediately capture their value while ignoring many of their defects. T.S. Eliot seems to have a more balanced view when he says, "We should be prepared to entertain the possibility that these Frenchmen have seen something in Poe that English-speaking readers have missed.[65] On another occasion, speaking of the French poets' relation to Poe, Eliot says, "What we get from a study of these French poets in relation to Poe is an understanding of their aesthetics which enlarges our understanding of their poetry. And by 'aesthetics' here, I do not mean merely an abstract theory of what poetry should be; I mean an attitude to poetry, by poets of great critical capacity, which has affected indirectly a good deal of poetry written since and which has also affected the attitude of readers towards their poetry."[66] What the Frenchmen have seen in Poe is precisely his attitude to poetry which helps to start a great change in the writing and reading of poetic works. While Emerson, as has been shown, describes his ideal poet in his essay "The Poet"; Poe, in his essays "The Poetic Principle" and "The Philosophy of Composition," expounds his views on the ideal poetry.

By availing himself of an idea of John S. Mill, Poe starts his essay with an assertion that "a long poem does not exist," "'a long poem' is simply a flat contradiction in terms."[67] Poe's assertion was later echoed by Baudelaire who, speaking of the sonnet, wrote that long poems are "the means for those who are incapable of making short ones."[68] In Mill's fashion, this assertion is based on a psychological premise that "a poem deserves its title only in as much as it excites by elevating the soul. The value of the poem is in the ratio of this elevating excitement (p.266). Since psychologically speaking, all excitements are transient, it follows that there can be no long poem. Judging by the principle he himself set up,

Poe begins to challenge the long-established paragons. *Paradise Lost* and the *Iliad* are merely "a series of minor poems (in the sense of short poems)" interposed by "passages of platitude," which "no critical pre-judgment can force us to admire" (p.267). Certainly, Poe was not the first to describe poetry in such a way. Coleridge, for example, defines poetry as "the art of communicating whatever we wish to communicate, so as both to express and *to produce excitement*, but for the purpose of immediate pleasure ..."[69]. However, it is Poe's merit to have this single object of poetry highlighted so that "the ratio of elevating excitement" has become the sole criterion in judging a poem. Such a big move in the attitude to poetry will necessarily bring about great changes in the functions traditionally assigned to poetry. First, truth is lifted out of the premise of poetry. Poetry and truth are considered to be like oil and water, impossible to reconcile. To assume that the "ultimate object of all poetry is truth," Poe argues is "the heresy of the didactic," which has accomplished more in the corruption of our poetical literature than all its enemies combined" (p.271). Second, passion is no longer relevant either. Passion is the excitement of the heart and its tendency is to degrade, rather than to elevate the soul (p.290). Poetry concerns itself with "pleasurable elevation of excitement of *the soul*, which we recognize as the poetic sentiment, and which is so easily distinguished from truth that is the satisfaction of the reason, or from passion that is the excitement of the heart" (p.275).

Having excluded truth and passion from poetry, Poe proclaims: "Beauty is the sole legitimate province of the poem,"[70] and defines poetry simply as "the rhythmical creation of beauty" (p.275). His concept of the beautiful, however, is quite extraordinary. According to him, beauty is "not a quality... but an effect." By "effect," he means "that intense and pure elevation of the soul" (p.197). There are two kinds of beauty, Poe tells us, the beauty before us and the beauty above us. He writes,

> It is the desire of the moth for the star. It is no mere appreciation of the Beauty before us - but a wild effort to reach the Beauty above.

> Inspired by an ecstatic prescience of the glories beyond the grave, we struggle, by multi-form combinations among the things and the thoughts of the Time, to attain a portion of that Loveliness whose very elements, perhaps, appertain to eternity alone" (pp.273-4).

It is "the Beauty above" that a poem should strive for. This kind of beauty is spiritual, "the Uranian" rather than "the Dionaean Venus." It is linked with "divine and rapturous joys," and belongs to eternity alone. This kind of beauty is "ethereal," "mystic," and "supernal." This kind of beauty is an effect which exists beyond the text, the words, and this world - "the glories beyond the grave."

This supernal beauty is produced only by a sort of pure poetry, or in Poe's own words, by "this poem *per se* - this poem written solely for the poem's sake" (p.272). Here the emphasis of the autonomy of poetry comes very close to the philosophy of "Art for Art's Sake."

To create such poetry and to attain the supernal beauty, Poe is inspired by music. "It is in music, perhaps, that the soul most nearly attains the great end for which, when inspired by the poetic sentiment, it struggles - the creation of supernal beauty." And he has no doubt that the field for poetic development is to be found "in the union of poetry with music" (pp.274-5). This claim of music as the paramount model of all arts foreshadows the so-called "Richard Wagner Cult" in Europe of the 1890s. The formula of "the union of poetry with music," which Poe proposed ten years earlier than Wagner, is a first but significant step towards the poetic communication of "the inner rhythm" in the fashion of music. Although musicality has always been an essential element in poetry, the new emphasis on the music implies the suppression of the referential meaning in favour of the musical meaning - a meaning which is not predetermined but has to be evoked, suggested, intimated and which is indefinite:

> I know that indefiniteness is an element of the true music... Give to it any undue decision - imbue it with any very determinate tone - and you deprive it at once of its ethereal, its ideal, its intrinsic and essential character. You dispel its luxury of dream. You dissolve the atmosphere of the mystic upon which it floats. You exhaust it of its breath of faery. It now becomes a tangible and easily appreciable idea - a thing of the earth, earthy.[71]

And

> music is the perfection of the soul or idea of Poetry. The vagueness of exultation aroused by a sweet air which should be strictly indefinite and never too strongly suggestive is precisely what we should aim at in poetry.[72]

"Vagueness," "indefiniteness," "ethereal," "mystic," "faery," "dream" and "suggestive" are the words Poe uses to describe his ideal poetry and also the words which are to be repeated again and again by French symbolists.

Poe looks upon poetry as opposed to science and advocates a kind of radical aesthetic theory. He claims that a poem should be judged by its evocative power, "by the impressions it makes, by the effect it produces" (p.268). The best effect possible is that that most elevates the soul. The object of poetry has little to do with either intellect or morals. Beauty, especially supernal beauty, which includes Longinian sublime (p.275). is its sole province. For him beauty is an effect, not a quality. To obtain such an effect, poetry should learn from music because it is in music that vague, strange, ethereal, unearthy and supernal beauty is evoked.

Yvor Winters remarks that Poe "would rob us of all subject matter, and would reduce poetry from its traditional position as the act of complete comprehension to a position of triviality."[73] Winters's assertion is rather questionable. Starting from Poe down to the French symbolists and some Modernists, subject matter has been put in a secondary position. Having said that, I think it should also be understood that Poe draws a clear distinction between the object, the subject matter and the creative process of poetry. In terms of the object of poetry, it aims at an effect - the supernal, ethereal beauty. In terms of subject matter, that which "induces in the poet himself the true poetic effect," Poe actually has not ruled out anything. At the end of "The Poetic Principle," Poe enumerates virtually all possible subjects ranging from all sorts of natural beauty through "all noble thoughts - all unworldly motives - all holy impulses - all chivalrous,

generous, and self-sacrificing deeds," to the harmony of the rustling of women's robes, as well as her "gentle charities, her meek and devotional endurances, the faith, the purity, the strength, the altogether divine majority of her love" (p.291). Obviously, not everything mentioned here can be characterized as "triviality." Speaking of the creative process of poetry, not only does Poe insist on the role played by intellect and reason, but he actually advocates a scientific method of composition. He expresses his disbelief in impulse, intuition and inspiration which are all favourite theses of Romanticism, and maintains that the poetic effect has to be planned and well calculated, asserting that the "truly imaginative are never otherwise than analytic."[74]

Nevertheless, I would suggest that Poe's major contribution lies in his theory of poetic effect and his concept of supernal beauty. Both views have been severely attacked by modern American critics.[75] The fact that Poe is a major modern innovator of literary techniques in prose seems to have already been firmly established. His poetic theory, on the other hand, still needs sympathetic understanding. It seems to me that those tradition-bound Anglo-American critics have great difficulty in recognizing the value of Poe's theory. In this respect, a comparative study of Poe's theory of poetic effect and Chinese Yan Yu's theory of "xing qu"[76] or the Coleridgean "pleasurable interest" or "mystic effect"[77], would be beneficial. For all these three poet-critics are equally advocating that poetry should aim at producing an aesthetic effect which is intangible, unearthly and beyond the text, rather than communicating a thought or passion. Yang Wanli, a Chinese Song dynasty poet, contends that a good poet should not be preoccupied with the rhetoric and meaning of a poem. A poem still stands when stripped of its rhetoric and meaning. What is left is its great "after-taste."[78] He also stresses the effect rather than the substance of a poem. The highest idea of poetry, as Zhong Rong puts it, resides in the capacity to "give endless pleasure to those who savour it, and to move the hearts of those who listen to it."[79]

Poe's concept of supernal beauty is an aesthetic one. Wellek suggests that by "supernal beauty" Poe "asserts a metaphysical claim to a glimpse of the highest truth."[80] This is only partly true. Poe's concept may have - but is certainly not limited to - a metaphysical sense. The nearest concept in Chinese aesthetics is "miao" 妙 , which has so far had no ideal English equivalent. "Miao" means a different kind of beauty from "mei." While "mei" 美 is explicit, referring to the beautiful in appearance, "miao" is implicit, referring to the beautiful in essence. "Mei" is sensuous, and can be described and presented; "miao" is spiritual, and can only be evoked or suggested. "Mei" can be seen, heard, tasted or perceived directly; "miao" can only be savoured or appreciated through reflection and contemplation. "Mei," like "beauty," is "skin-deep"; whereas "miao," like "supernal beauty," is profound, mysterious and enigmatic. "Mei" is "the beauty before us"; and "miao" is "the beauty above." Thus, "miao" is often but not always metaphysical, involving "divine and rapturous joy." "Mei" is beauty and "miao" supernal beauty.

Admittedly, Poe is not a systematic and profound thinker. His theory is not always rigorous, as many critics have pointed out. He himself has not made such a claim. At the beginning of "The Poetic Principle," he declares: "I have no design to be thorough or profound" (p.266). However, his theories, especially his theory of poetic effect and the concept of the supernal beauty, have thrown a light on the essence of poetry, which may come down to these questions: what makes a verse poetry? What is the most poetic poetry? What are the functions or objectives of poetry?

Poe was a harbinger, rather than an architect, of a new aesthetics and new poetics. He attempted to give his own answers to the above questions. His emphasis on "this poem *per se*," on the vagueness and suggestiveness of poetic meaning, on the effect and taste, rather than the subject-matter of a poem, and on the music as the best approach to "supernal beauty," all deserve the merit of a path-finder and had great repercussions throughout the literary world. In fact, his aesthetics helped

to initiate a new movement of poetry, which lately has been acknowledged as a high peak in Western literary history.

It was Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867) who first detected the value of Poe's aesthetic theory and introduced it to the French world of literature. Baudelaire has been considered by various critics as "an ancestor" or the "father," or the "precursor" of the French movement but Wellek thinks that "he should not ... be labelled a symbolist.[81] What matters, of course, is the substance, not the label. After all, as Valéry once wittily remarked, "You cannot get drunk on the labels of bottles."[82]

Baudelaire translated Poe's essay "The Philosophy of Composition," reproduced "The Poetic Principle" in an article on Theophile Gautier, often used Poe's words as his own, and made them a primary source of his aesthetic ideas.

Like Poe, Baudelaire advocates in his criticism the supernal beauty, the concept of pure poetry, the poetic effect of elevating the soul, the beauty of indefiniteness, the animosity against didacticism, the distrust of inspiration (he explains inspiration as "a reward for day to day work"), and, with the added influence of Wagner, he pushed forward the idea of music as the model for poetry in expressing human feelings. Yet, as far as the theory of symbolism is concerned, what interests us most is his theory of correspondences and his practice of using landscape as symbol of state of mind.

One of the assumptions which underlie the symbolist theory and practice is the idea that all things are One in which everything exists as a part of the great Unity. Nerval, another precursor of the French symbolist movement, wrote: "Everything lives, everything moves, everything corresponds.[83]

One of the believers and advocators of this ancient doctrine was the Swedish philosopher Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772). His doctrine of correspondence is "an attempt to describe and explain the relations between the spiritual world and our material universe by means of linguistic analogies."[84] Baudelaire accepted this doctrine with much deference. In an article on Hugo (1861), he wrote: "Moreover

Swedenborg ... has already taught us... that everything, form, motion, number, colour, scents, in the *spiritual* as well as in the *natural* world, is significant, reciprocal, converse, corresponding..."[85] The idea of universal analogy is actually often repeated in his writings. He praised Gautier for his "immense innate understanding of universal *correspondence* and symbolism, that repertory of all metaphor."[86] And in his *Salon of 1859*, he writes, "The whole visible universe is but a storehouse of images and signs..."[87] He contends that it is the business of the poet to translate and decipher these mystic signs - "Now, what is a poet ... if not a translator, a decipherer?"[88] And what to translate and decipher? No less than the transcendental truth and the state of the poet's soul. For Baudelaire, these can be done through imagination; for imagination is "an almost divine faculty which perceives immediately and without philosophical methods the inner and secret relations of things, the correspondences and the analogies."[89] It is through imagination that natural images and signs are given "a relative place and value." In a famous sonnet *Correspondances*, he does use his imagination and express the idea of universal correspondence and its application in literary creation:

Correspondances

La Nature est un temple où de vivants piliers
Laissent parfois sortir de confuses paroles;
L'homme y passe à travers des forêts de symboles
Qui l'observent avec des regards familiers.

Comme de longs échos qui de loin se confondent
Dans une ténébreuse et profonde unité,
Vaste comme la nuit et comme la clarté,
Les parfums, les couleurs et les sons se répondent.

Il est de parfums frais comme des chairs d'enfants,
Doux comme les hautbois, verts comme les prairies,
- Et d'autres, corrompus, riches et triomphants,

Ayant l'expansion des choses infinies,
Comme l'ambre, le musc, le benjoin et l'encens,
Qui chantent les transports de l'esprit et des sens.[90]

If Nature is a temple, the living pillars [*vivants piliers*] are a proper metaphor for its trees. Stirred by winds, the trees give a rustling which sounds to the poet like

murmuring words. Since the dome of a temple is conventionally symbolic of heaven, "the living pillars" are a symbolic linkage between the world above and the world below, the spiritual and the physical worlds. Thus, Baudelaire is actually speaking of vertical symbolism - nature as a symbol of the spiritual and the moral. Tindall has noted that Baudelaire in his sonnet "does not differ in substance or image from Emerson, who in his essay on the poet calls nature "a temple whose walls are covered with emblems... and the distinctions which we make in events ... disappear when nature is used as a symbol."[91] And I would suggest that he may also have got some inspiration from Poe, who in his essay "The Poetic Principle," which Baudelaire quotes as his own, has these words: "He perceives it in the songs of birds... in the sighing of the night wind - in the repining voice of the forest... in the fresh breath of the woods - in the scent of the violet - in the voluptuous perfume of the hyacinth - in the suggestive odor that comes to him..."[92]

This shows that the ideas of universal correspondences and nature objects as a special medium in communicating are not an individual's personal invention; neither are they isolated phenomena in one country or one literature only. However, Baudelaire's idea of correspondence operates on four different levels of meaning. First, there are the correspondences between the spiritual and the material; between the natural and the supernatural; between the object before us and the "splendour beyond the grave"; and between the appearance and essence. The spiritual or divine world above and the material or mundane world below are joined by the "living pillars" - synecdochic nature symbols. This is what has been called correspondence in the vertical sense. Second, there are correspondences between the things of nature and the things of mind - feelings and thoughts - or between landscapes and *état d'âme*. Baudelaire confessed, "I have always liked to seek in the exterior and visible world examples and metaphors which may help me to characterize the joys and impressions of a spiritual order."[93] Perfumes may evoke the feeling or thoughts of "corruption, rich and triumphant." "Fragrance is virtue," as Wang Yi said. Third, there are correspondences between different sensations, between visual and

tactile, gustatory, olfactory and auditory sensations. "To know how to use a language is to practice a kind of evocative magic," said Baudelaire in his essay on Gautier. "It is then that color speaks like a deep, vibrant voice,... that perfume provokes corresponding thoughts and memories, that passion murmurs or roars its eternally changeless language."[94] These words serve properly as a footnote to the thought expressed in the above-quoted sonnet. The wide use, sometimes over-use, of synaesthesia by symbolists made it almost a hallmark of symbolism. Finally, there are correspondences between different art forms, between poetry and music, poetry and painting, poetry and drama, etc, which, as Peyre has remarked, have become "one of the features of symbolism attributable to Baudelaire."[95] In his essay on Victor Hugo, Baudelaire writes, "The music of Victor Hugo's verses is adapted to the profound harmonies of nature; as a sculptor, he carves into his stanzas the unforgettable form of things; as a painter, he illuminates them within the right color. And the three impressions penetrate the reader's mind simultaneously, as if they came directly from nature. From this triple impression comes *the morality of things*."[96] Hugo is here portrayed as a man of four in one: poet, musician, sculptor and painter. Wellek comments that this is "a hymn to poets in general."[97]

Obviously, not all of these are Baudelaire's new discoveries. The universal correspondence or analogy was an ancient idea and was very popular in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The confusion of different senses, or synaesthesia, can be found in such early writings as Homer's *The Iliad* and numberless Chinese classical lyrics,[98] let alone German and English romantic poems. However, it was through this poem and Rimbaud's *Voyelles* that synaesthesia as a mode of perception and a literary device was widely recognized and popularized.[99] Admittedly, the use of nature or natural objects as symbols of a poet's *état d'âme* had already been a romantic convention; yet in this poem of Baudelaire's, there is something different. Instead of the pattern familiar to romantic dominance through a beautiful but passive nature, we have here a nature which is conceived as the active, living agent, a temple of living trees, a forest of

symbols, peering with an air of knowing sufferance at the passive man. The confusion of images and of viewpoints is a counterpart of the confusion of words which seem to issue from the forest rather than from the man. It is nature who seems to challenge man to read its riddles and it is not man who makes nature speak his mind.

According to Lilian R. Furst, by the middle of the eighteenth century, nature ceased to be "a mere tool of man" and was first granted an autonomous existence, and poets, "instead of using vague, standard phrases, began actually to observe and to describe what they had seen."[100] This may be taken as the inception of Western nature poetry. Later, during the pre-Romantic period, "sensibility intervenes to turn the objective portrayal of nature into a subjective feeling for nature."[101] Such an intervention results in the assimilation of the natural milieu to the individual's state of mind, and in what is generally known as *paysage état d'âme* (landscape state of mind) which can be first found in Rousseau's writings. However, the romantic *paysage état d'âme*, though already expressive of the poet's feelings and emotions, is in effect bound to the external settings. In romantic poetry, landscapes are portrayed in details, logically united into a mimetic whole. As a result, one feels that they are external to the poet's state of mind and, as symbols, they lack immediacy. Baudelaire's method is different. He created what has been called *le paysage interieur* (the interior landscape) which is psychologic rather than mimetic, composed of widely disparate images in juxtaposition. This kind of landscape is not designed to present the poet's experiences through detailed descriptions of the exterior world with connectives of logical enunciation. The images do not form an integral picture; and the reader has to pick up the pieces and make up the whole picture by himself. The images are united not in conceptual thoughts, but rather in the common emotions they evoke. While each having their own evocative power, they also act upon each other and effect in such a way, as Mallarmé later put it, that "they illuminate one another and pass like a trail of fire over precious stones."[102] In the poem "Harmonie du Soir,"[103] for example,

Baudelaire uses disparate images such as *fleur*, *encensoir*, *sons*, *parfums*, *violon*, *alter*, *coeur*, *ceil*, *soleil*, *sang*, and *ostensoir*, which are juxtaposed and presented in such a way that each motivates the other, each defines the meaning of the other. The vibrating flower evokes the idea of waltzing and the trembling violin in turn evokes "a heart that suffers." In the other direction, the flower which emits perfumes evokes the idea of a censer which in turn evokes the idea of a great altar. And these two systems of images are finally fused into one single image - evening with 'fading light'. It is through this chain of images and the incremental repetition that the poem moves forward like a symphony until it comes to a standstill with a dramatic soliloquy "Your memory shines in me like a monstrance." The poet keeps from making any direct statement about his own feelings and emotion and remains seemingly objective.

Thus, interior landscape is different from exterior landscape in that it has become one with the poet's *état d'âme*. Unlike the exterior landscape, it does not serve as a device to express the poet's feelings and emotions; rather, it is the embodiment of the poet's feelings and emotions. It is not a reflection but a manifestation of the poet's soul. It is organized not logically and conceptually but through emotions and the development of emotions.

T.S.Eliot suggested that Baudelaire had invented a language at a moment when French poetry was famishing such an invention.[104] What he meant by Baudelaire's invention of a language was the latter's use of metropolitan settings as symbols of *état d'âme*. In Baudelaire's poems, the city - Paris - is a symbol for man's soul. Its changeableness suggests the feeling of transience. Its slums and streets swarming with prostitutes symbolize the evil in man. In a word, ordinary and common scenes in a metropolis turn into symbols under Baudelaire's pen, revealing man's soul and "the profoundness of life" as he himself put it:

> In certain almost supernatural states of mind, the profoundness of life in its entirety is revealed in the spectacle, as ordinary as it may be, that is before one's eyes. It becomes the Symbol of it.[105]

Thus Baudelaire opened a new horizon for the use of metropolitan scenes as symbolic landscape. The importance and significance of this invention in the development of the theories of symbolism in the West was best explained by T.S. Eliot when he said,

> It is not merely in the use of imagery of common life, not merely in the use of imagery of the sordid life of a great metropolis, but in the elevation of such imagery to the *first intensity* - presenting it as it is, and yet making it represent something much more than itself - that Baudelaire has created a mode of release and expression for other men.[106]

5.4 Mallarmé and Valéry

Baudelaire opened the path to a new poetics; yet the high priest of the new poetics was none other than Stephane Mallarmé (1842-1898). In spite of his half-hearted commitment to "our solemn tradition,"[107] Mallarmé emerged in the latter half of the 19th century as a rebel against the conventional pieties of his time. His poetry and poetics made more than one tilt at the Western establishment. As a literary theorist, he was a herald of a new doctrine of literary creation, which was to be called Modernism.

Mallarmé's poetry is notoriously difficult and his poetics is by no means easy. The difficulty lies not only in the fact that, as Fowlie has noted, "No one single text of Mallarmé gives a complete statement of his poetics... One would have to draw on all of Mallarmé's writings and probably his conversations;"[108] but also, perhaps more importantly, in the increasingly evident truth that his poetics is essentially different from all that had existed before him. In fact, his theory is so novel and so innovative that he himself was not completely sure about it;[109] or as Ortega y Gasset said, "Perhaps he himself did not quite realize his ambition."[110]

It is widely held that Mallarmé aimed to express or to create an ideal world of which, in the Platonic sense, our world is merely an imperfect imitation.[111] Others, like Chiari, suggest that what Mallarmé aimed at was not a Platonic or transcendental world but transcendence, and "the very essence of things."[112] Still others, such as Wilson, assert that, for Mallarmé and the Symbolist School as a whole, symbols "are usually chosen arbitrarily by the poet to stand for special ideas of his own - they are a sort of disguise for their ideas."[113] Although their views vary to some extent, they have at least one thing in common - that Mallarmé aims to express by means of poetry something which in most cases stands for an idea or a truth, no matter whether it is Platonic or non-Platonic. They are obviously not prepared to be convinced that there might be a poetics which advocates poetry written about nothing.

However, their views seem to me to have run exactly counter to Mallarmé's fundamental ideas of poetry, which he inherited from his "great master "- E. A. Poe whose poetic theory as stated in his essay *The Poetic Principle* became the basis of an aesthetic doctrine followed and carried forward by all major French symbolists. It is therefore worthwhile to repeat here that one of the most important poetic principles laid down by Poe is that a poem should be written "solely for the poem's sake."[114] He explicitly excludes truth and passion from the objectives of poetry. No one, including Poe himself, has carried out this principle more thoroughly and determinedly than Mallarmé who, as Ortega y Gasset put it, "was the first poet of the nineteenth century who wanted to be nothing but a poet."[115] And if we are allowed to borrow Marcel Raymond's division of poets into the poet as seer and the poet as artist[116], it would appear that Mallarmé wanted to be poet as artist. For him, the world around him was too undesirable and unpleasant to live in. The only solution possible seems to be for the poet to create an ideal world through aesthetic construction. This ideal world, though nothing like the Platonic Form, is the poet's *Absolute*. And for Mallarmé, as Bowra has pointed out, "the Absolute is not Being but the Beautiful." What Mallarmé dreams of and seeks to create is a

world of the beautiful, a world of aesthetic pleasure and joy, which was "outside and beyond thought and therefore beyond significant words."[117]

This world is not a reflection, nor a representation of the real world. Nor is it a make-believe world tinged with human feelings and burdened with meanings which are ready to be taken out by clever readers. Nor is it even a concretized imaginary world, static, picturesque, full of exotic and fantastic things which are not to be seen in the real world. Rather, it is an ideal world without referring to any particular idea - "a reference without a referent";[118] a vague, fluid, shadowy, ghostly world, a world totally cut off from reality; a world without substance; in a word, a world of nihility, or, in Mallarmé's own word, a world of "le Néant," "le Rien qui est la verité." The purpose of creating such a world is not to represent or reflect the resented reality, nor to make spiritual and transcendental claims, but to bring about an atmosphere, an effect, with indefinite suggestion. Mallarmé writes in his *Crisis of the Verse*:

> The Decadent or Mystic School... converge in an idealism which, like a fugue or a sonata, shuns natural materials, seems to be hostile to any thought which orders them precisely, and preserves only the suggestiveness of things.[119]

The approach is to suggest; the substance should be free from natural materials and thought. Mallarmé's tone is defiant: the traditional aesthetic is an error and must be abandoned, "even if it has informed many a masterpiece." It is the effect that the poet should strive for: never mind the "dense, intense wood of trees" but try to bring out "the horror of the forest or the silent thunder scattered amongst the leaves." To obtain such an effect, one must resort to suggestion, allusion and evocation - Mallarmé uses all these three words - rather than direct statement or description because, paradoxically,

> description conceals the fullness and intrinsic virtues of monuments, the sea and the human face.[120]

The "intrinsic virtues," as he later explains, mean "the spirit," "that volatile dispersion which is the musicality of nothing."[121]

On another occasion in 1891, in the capacity of a writer who had belonged to the Parnassian school, Mallarmé spelled out the differences between the Parnassians and his new poetics, again centring attention on whether the poet should describe or suggest:

> ... the Parnassians, for their part, take the thing as a whole and show it; that is why they are deficient in mystery. They deprive the mind of the delicious joy of believing that it is creating. To name an object is to do away with three-quarters of the enjoyment of the poem which is derived from the satisfaction of guessing little by little; to suggest it, that is the illusion. It is the perfect handling of the mystery that constitutes the symbol: to evoke an object little by little in order to show a state of mind or inversely to choose an object and to disengage from it a state of mind, by a series of unriddlings.[122]

For Mallarmé, the symbol is not an object standing for an idea, but the "perfect handling of the mysterious," which means to "evoke an object little by little in order to show a state of mind." This is where the whole meaning of Mallarmé's new poetics lies. Mallarmé has deprived the word of its function of reference and representation and made it point to itself rather than to the outside world. Frye has said that the Symbolists use the word as "a symbol which turns away from its sign-meaning in the material world, not to point something in the spiritual world, for this would still make it representational, but to awaken other words to suggest or evoke something in the spiritual world."[123] This is a principle of French symbolism proper, which distinguishes it in essence from any other doctrine of symbolism. What should be stressed here is that, in Mallarmé, the task to evoke and to suggest has been transferred from the writer to the language itself. Roland Barthes has remarked:

> In France, Mallarmé was doubtless the first to see and foresee in its full extent the necessity to substitute language itself for the person who until then had been supposed to be its owner. For him, for us too, it is language which speaks, not the author; to write is, through a prerequisite impersonality (not at all to be confused with the castrating objectivity of the realist novelist), to reach that point where only language acts, "performs," and not "me." *Mallarmé's entire poetics consists in suppressing the author in the interest of writing* (which is, as will be seen, to restore the place of the reader).[124]

"Suppressing the author in the interest of writing" is an excellent point which constitutes one of the major characteristics of Mallarmé's new poetics, and it also serves as a starting point from which we may hope to have a better understanding of Mallarmé's belief. Barthes's remarks are fully attested by Mallarmé's own words:

> L'oeuvre pure implique la disparition élocutoire du poëte, qui cède l'initiative aux mots, par le heurt de leur inégalité mobilisés; ils s'allument de reflets réciproques comme une virtuelle traînée de feux sur des pierreries, remplaçant la respiration perceptible en l'ancien souffle lyrique ou la direction personnelle enthousiaste de la phrase.
>
> ... je suis maintenant impersonnel et non plus Stéphane que tu as connu, - mais une aptitude qu'a i'llnivers spirituel à se déve lopper, à travers ce qui fut moi.[125]

It becomes very clear that what Mallarmé means by "impersonality" is "not to be confused with the castrating objectivity of the realist novelist," as it is so often misread;[126] nor should it be understood as the "non-personal situation" [*wu wo zhi jing* 無我之境] in Chinese poetics, in which the subject is suppressed so that the over-all effect will appear as if the situation presented were unmediated by the author and, therefore, remained itself.[127] Mallarmé's "impersonnel," or "impersonality" in the translation of Barthes's essay and "depersonalized" in Chadwick's version,[128] means "the disappearance of the poet-speaker" or, in Barthes's words, "the death of the author" and the substitution of language. The author has lost his dominant position over the work. He has become a mere instrument, "simply a means whereby the spiritual universe can become visible" and can develop through the author.[129] In such writings, there is no personality of the author to be found, no message from the author to be conveyed, and no feeling or emotion which belongs to the author to be expressed. The moment the work is completed is the time when the author's function as a means is finished and his relation with the work is severed once and for all. The language of the work begins to operate, to act, to perform and to make sense all on its own. As Foucault has pointed out, "This reversal transforms writing into an interplay of signs, regulated less by the content it signifies than by the very nature of the signifier."[130]

Thus, Mallarmé, this "major French linguist,"[131] made a courageous attempt, as Jameson put it, to "motivate that which in its origin was wholly 'unmotivated'"[132] by reversing the most archaic language theory of all which claims the link between words and things and by reacting against the arbitrary nature of language. To accomplish this, Mallarmé finds in music an ideal model. He says,

> Certainly I never sit in the tiers of a concert hall without perceiving, in the sublime darkness, some primitive version of a poem which dwells deep in human nature, and which can be understood because the composer knows that in order to convey its vast contour he must resist the temptation to explain. And so I imagine, no doubt heeding a writer's ineradicable instinct, that nothing endures if it is not uttered; and since the great rhythms of literature are being broken down, as I have said, and dispersed in fragmentary rhythmic units or orchestrated vocables, we need just now to investigate the art of transposing the symphony to the book: this would be nothing more than a realization of our own wealth. For music must undeniably result from the full power of the intellectual word, not from the elemental sounds of strings, brass and woodwind: it must be a full, manifest totality of relationships.[133]

What interests Mallarmé in music is not so much the musical sound, "the elemental sounds of strings," as the musical model of expression, by which I mean the way in which "the vast contour" is conveyed or the musical method of arriving at the positive meaning through successive negations of meaning. Music is essentially not referential; musical notations have no referential meaning. The special charm of music, as Mallarmé says, does not lie in "the containing of any reality through description."[134] The ideal poetry, as the combination of music with verse, should not imprison itself in the description of reality, but rather should cut itself off from the reality, and by means of evocation, allusion and suggestion, to reach the "musicality of nothing" which, while bearing no visible meaning, may connote any meaning. This is what Mallarmé calls "l'infini du néant." A poem composed in this way is not a "spoken poem," but a "silent poem" or a "muted concert," in which "words lose their meaning in the darkened realm of sound."[135]

This goal can be reached through the manipulation of the language. Jakobson asserts that poetry "is organized violence committed on ordinary speech."[136] Mallarmé distinguishes poetic language from the language of everyday

communication. His method is to purify the word of its referential meaning by resorting to "abstracting." When he uses the word "fleur," it is "the absent flower of all bouquets"[137] which exists beyond the perceptual world. The real is purified and what is left is the idea of flower which can be any flower in human imagination and can suggest a thousand different meanings.

Another method of his is to abandon deliberately traditional rhetorical means of literary writing, to violate the prescriptions of grammar, syntax and style, to experiment with novel rhyme, metre and stanzaic forms and to try bizarre typographical effects.

Thus, with well-organized "violence," the language of the poet will hopefully reach "its full potential"; and words will form a "full, manifest totality of relationships."[138] With the collision and illumination of words with one another, the poet would be able to perform the miracle, which "transposes a natural phenomenon into a disappearing aural one by the device of written language, so as to allow the pure idea to rise from it, divorced of its direct and material associations."[139]

Mallarmé's symbolism is therefore essentially different from the traditional concept of symbol, according to which the individual word or sentence "stands for" an individual object, event or idea. In Mallarmé's symbolism, we see the entire system of signs working in concert to suggest indefinite infiniteness, which is to be understood from the reader's perspective. The poet, on the other hand, does not intend to convey or express anything. In this sense, both "transcendental symbolism" and "human symbolism" are irrelevant to his symbolism. What he or his poetics aims at is the mysterious poetic effect reminiscent of the theories of his mentors - Poe and Baudelaire.

To summarize Mallarmé's theory of symbolism, we may borrow two Chinese idiomatic expressions: "miao bu ke yan 妙不可言" [mysterious/ineffable beauty] and "qu jin qi miao 曲盡其妙" [express

fully by means of music/indirection the ineffable beauty]. Here *miao*, as has been explained in the previous section, means mysterious and ineffable beauty. It is mysterious, because it is beauty beyond perception and perhaps beyond comprehension. It is ineffable, so it has to be suggested, evoked and intimated rather than stated directly. In creating such beauty, music is found to be the only perfectly constructed example of method. The Chinese word "qu" in the expression *qu jin qi miao* happens to be sylleptical of these two meanings -"indirect" and "music," and Chinese critics have always held that music has no meaning and therefore is capable of containing any meaning. Thus, these two Chinese expressions are happily capable of representing Mallarmé's idea of symbolism.

Sartre wrote, "Mallarmé's elevation to the imaginary arises from his resentment of reality, and the poems written in that mood are symbolic acts of revenge: the poet's words are designed to undo the work of the first Creation, the poem being a second and higher version."[140] Thinking of escaping the world while living in it is like trying to leave the earth by pulling one's own hair and is doomed to failure, or can succeed only in dream. Divorced from reality, the poet's inspiration will surely dry up. On the other hand, "words, part of creation, can never be rid completely of the contingent, and therefore they cannot destroy *la hasard* - creation."[141] Mallarmé recognized that limit and admitted that his poetics was, in the end, *une impasse*. He attempted to escape the real world but only ended up in being separated from the world by a thin smoke from his pipe. He attempted to escape the prisonhouse of language but only ended up in being imprisoned in a different cell. The "Grand Oeuvre" he promised and worked on for many years never materialized. In fact in his last thirty years he managed to write only thirty poems in all. His brilliant disciple, Paul Valéry (1871-1945), when under his spell, totally abandoned poetic writing in the 1890s[142] and was able to compose poems again twenty years later.

It has been suggested that Valéry's poetic writings are more vigorous and masculine than Mallarmé's.[143] Yet in terms of their theories of poetry, it seems that Valéry is not as original a thinker as Mallarmé, to whom he often sounds like an echo. In Valéry, we see a practising poet who examines the creative process and speculates about poetic art. Nevertheless, he has made his impact on modern theories of literature. His sharp distinction between the author, the work and the reader and his theory of language are among the most interesting arguments which have foreshadowed contemporary literary theories.

When Valéry finally returned to poetry, he had already begun "to speak of Symbolism in the past tense."[144] In spite of his pronounced rejection of Symbolism, he has been described as "the Classic of Symbolism,"[145] and T.S. Eliot said "Valéry is the 'completion' and 'explanation' of Symbolism."[146] Yet I would describe Valéry as "conservative symbolism" and Mallarmé as "radical symbolism." I use the word "conservative," because Valéry retains the essential element of the traditional concept of symbolism - the use of one thing to stand for something much more than itself. In Mallarmé, everything is so fluid that there can hardly be any meaning to speak of. What one confronts is often "le Néant" and "le silence," total blank which is to be filled by qualified readers who are inspired and elevated by his beautiful and mysterious imagery and melodic musicality. If one mentions the meaning of Mallarmé's poems, he is more often than not using the word in a different sense from usual. On the other hand, while one speaks of the meaning of Valéry's poems, one feels more certain about the subject, though one can say with equal certainty that his poems are no less ambiguous and polysemous. Valéry's symbols "are either strictly self-consistent or else chosen in such a way that we know what each one means and does." Compared with Mallarmé, Valéry is "more ready to explain what he means, to give hints in the titles and elsewhere about a poem's subject."[147] His symbols are, by and large, made through an analogy or corresponding aspect of his sensual outer world. Thus, the growth of a plant symbolizes the growth of meaning, or the maturation of the work of art; sun and

light always symbolize intellectual power; the sea conveys the idea of life; the wind suggests emotion, etc.[148]

However, it would be a mistake to assume that Valéry's symbols are so transparent that their meanings are readily available. On the contrary, his symbols are always suggestive, ambiguous, often mysterious, giving the impression of being closely related to Valéry's intellectual and creative life. His long poem *La Jeune Parque*, for instance, has been acclaimed as "the most obscure poem in French." In fact, it is so obscure that even its author seems to be not very sure about its subject. It is said that before it was printed a number of titles were considered by Valéry, which included Hélène, Larme, Pandore, Alpha, de la Lyre, Ebauche...[149] The reason is that, as Bowra has shown, "the poet deals with matters for which even his central symbol is inadequate, with feelings so little definable that they resist attempts to arrange them in a system or relate them in ordered thought."[150] This, I think, touches the essence of the obscurity of symbolist poems.

Another characteristic of Valéry's symbol is also revealed by Bowra: that "the poet and his symbol are not ultimately distinguished or distinguishable."[151] Valéry himself describes *La Jeune Parque* as "une rêverie."[152] But whose rêverie: Parque's or the poet's? We would agree with Bowra that "many of its lines are applicable both to the poet and the Young Fate." [153]

Still another characteristic of Valéry's symbolism is what L. Austin calls "clarity in complexity."[154] In terms of style, the imagery, the freedom from didacticism and practical knowledge or information, and the conveying of sensorial impressions of sight, sound, touch, taste and smell, Valéry's poems have the clarity of the first class. On the other hand, when it comes to the tone, the attitude, the subject and the possible connotations, his poems are among the most complex.

Many critics would take poems in *Charmes* as allegories of poetic creation. If we accept that allegory means "saying one thing and meaning another," then every interpretation must be more or less allegorical. When Bowra explains that, in the poem *La Cimetière Marin*, "the doves are his thoughts," "the tombs of the

cemetery become ... matters that his intellect has settled" and "the sunlight ... becomes his own intellectual detachment," one sees a one-to-one correspondence between images and ideas. If his interpretation is valid and the only possible interpretation, then we can say that this poem is an allegory. However, Valéry "is not primarily concerned with initiating us into the theoretical basis of his art, but with the lyrical celebration of certain joys of the mind, the rendering of his chosen symbols with the greatest possible evocative force, or the masterful handling of the metrical forms chosen."[155] In a word, he is primarily concerned with the *Form*, the poetry *per se*. *Les Pas*, another lyric in *Charmes*, has been widely interpreted as an allegory of the poet waiting for the coming of poetic inspiration.[156] This interpretation is not totally groundless; for Valéry himself said, referring to his poem *La Jeune Parque*, "He who knows how to read me will read an autobiography in the form. The matter is of small importance."[157] Yet Valéry in the private notes of his *Cahiers* attacked this sort of allegorical interpretation and pronounced his intention: "*Les Pas*, petit poeme purement sentimental auquel on prete un sens intellectuel, un symbol de 'l'aspiration'"[158] - a love-poem rather than a symbol of inspiration. Although the author's intention can by no means determine the interpretation of a literary work, and Valéry knows it, saying "my intention is only my intention, and the work is the work,"[159] this gives us some light on the distinctions of symbolism and allegory. In allegory, one reaches the meaning beyond the text through the language; in symbolism, the interest is always focused on the text itself and the meaning is formed, as it were, above the language. Here also the distinction of two kinds of language is involved which Mallarmé had first analysed and which Valéry carried forward.

Valéry argued that, compared with the musician, the poet is in a disadvantageous position. Unlike the musician, who "possesses a perfect group of well-defined means," the poet has to use language as his sole instrument which "has no poetic means." To create a poetic world, the poet has to use everyday language as raw material and to "create and re-create at every moment what the other

[musician] finds ready made and ready to use."[160] Besides, in music, sound acts upon a single sense, the sense of hearing; whereas the poetic language "forms a mixture of perfectly incoherent sensory and mental stimuli." Thus, each word couples many sounds and many meanings. "Many meanings, since the images each word suggests to us are generally rather different and their secondary images infinitely different."[161] Here Valéry tried to reveal the fundamental reasons why a literary work tends to have multiple, even infinite, meanings. He came to the conclusion: "There is no very fine work which is not susceptible of a great variety of equally plausible interpretations. The richness of a work is the number of senses or values which it can receive while still remaining itself."[162]

Valéry also discussed the use of language in prose and in poetry by comparing them to walking and dancing. "Walking," he said, "like prose, always has a precise object;" whereas "dancing is something quite different." According to him, there are two major differences between prose language and poetic language. First, prose, like walking, is "subjected to the rule of the straight line;" and poetry, like dancing, can never be straightforward. One has to intimate things rather than state them. Second, in walking, when the goal has been reached, the whole act will be immediately cancelled, "the effort consumes the cause, the end absorbs the means... only the result remains." Likewise, in prose, "once the language I have been using... fulfils its task, it vanishes almost as soon as it arrives." "In other words... the form is not preserved, does not survive understanding." By contrast, poetry "tends to reproduce itself in its form and ... asks to be reconstructed just as it was." Valéry went on to compare poetic language to a pendulum which swings between two symmetrical points - "form," which includes rhyme force, syllabic sonority and unusual word combinations, among other things, and "content," which includes the intellectual effect, the visions and feelings which make up the "meaning" of the given poem.

Austin has suggested that "the whole of Valéry's poetics is based on this distinction between the various functions of language."[163] And this distinction, I

believe, also underlies the theories of French symbolism in general. Symbolists were not interested in imitating Nature; they wanted to create their own world by means of poetic language. The distinction between various functions of language, however, is not merely a repetition of the old debate between poetic and prose languages. The essence of symbolism is a new moulding of its medium, its characteristic manipulation of language. The old language is hopelessly tied to the old world. To create a new world, a new medium is needed. Therefore, symbolists invariably committed themselves to the creation of a new medium, an individual language, the *langage dans un langage*,[164] or as Mallarmé put it, "a completely new word, foreign to the language and a part, it seems, of an incantation."[165] The Symbolists's opinions of language were later termed by Formalists as "the foregrounding" of language. Jan Mukarovsky said, "The function of poetic language consists in the maximum of foregrounding of the utterance.... In poetic language foregrounding achieves maximum intensity to the extent of pushing communication into the background as the objective of expression and of being used for its own sake; it is not used in the services of communication but in order to place in the foreground the act of expression, the act of speech itself."[166] Thus, Symbolists are not just advocators of "art for art's sake"; they are also advocators of "speech for speech's sake."

5.5 Yeats and Eliot

It has been suggested that, in a sense, Britain had her own symbolist movement in the Pre-Raphaelite and the Aesthetic Movement, and her own symbolist theorist equivalent to Mallarmé in Walter Pater (1839-1894).[167] The term "symbolist" was not adopted and the reason was perhaps, as Yeats put it, that "most people [in Britain] dislike an art if they are told it is symbolic, for they confuse symbol and allegory."[168] The theory of symbolism had to be imported from France through the translations and introduction of Arthur Symons and others.[169]

It was Symons who in his influential book described W.B. Yeats (1865-1936) as "the chief representative of that movement" in Britain.[170] Yeats's theories of poetry start from his deep dissatisfaction with the later Victorian English poetry which he thought was dominated by a highly conventional diction. "They have sought for no new thing," Yeats said, "but only to understand and to copy the pure inspiration of early times." He felt that the problem lay with the influence of science. The scientific movement brought with it a literature which was always tending to lose itself in externalities of all kinds, in opinion, in declamation, in picturesque writing, in word-painting..." There was need for a renewal of poetic inspiration, and Yeats found it in a new way of writing which was "to dwell upon the element of evocation, of suggestion, upon what we call the symbolism in great writers." Yeats contended that symbolism is an element of art, "the substance of all style."[171] He proclaimed that "All art that is not mere story-telling, or mere portraiture, is symbolism..."[172] and a "conscious indefinable symbolism" is "the substance of all style." And symbolism is the best way of saying things: "Symbolism said things which cannot be said so perfectly in any other way.[173]

According to Yeats, symbolism can be fragmentary or systematic. Keats, for example, is a fragmentary symbolist; "for while he evokes in his persons and his landscapes an infinite emotion... he does not set his symbols in the great procession as Blake would have him, 'in a certain order, suited to his imaginative energy'..." Systematic symbolists delight either in traditional symbolism as in the case of Rossetti or in a personal symbolism as in the case of Wagner. "Such men often fall into trances, or have waking dreams."[174] Obviously, French symbolism is in Yeats's category of systematic personal symbolism.

Yeats further distinguishes human symbols from intellectual symbols. The difference lies in that the former "evokes emotions alone" and the latter "evokes ideas alone, or ideas mingled with emotions" (p.160). Here, Yeats has not ruled out ideas from the objectives of poetry. However, there is a limit: the ideas should be no more than "fragments of the shadows thrown upon the intellect by the emotions"

that symbols evoke. Otherwise, he warns us, symbols will become "the playthings of the allegorist or the pedant, and soon pass away" (p.161). Yeats's attitude toeards the poems of the allegorist reminds us of Yan Yu's categorical opposition to the then general tendency to regard poetry as a vehicle of opinion or as a showroom of book knowledge. Yet Yeats goes further in explaining to what extent poetry can be involved with ideas. His answer is that the involvement should be neither too familiar nor too aloof, neither too distinct nor too obscure, and it should be like "fragments of the shadows." However, Yeats fails to elaborate how ideas and emotions are to be amalgamated. His interest is mainly on the human symbolism in which the poet mobilizes the sensuous world to stimulate and evoke emotions. Yeats wrote,

> All sounds, all colours, all forms, either because of their pre-ordained energies or because of long association, evoke indefinable and yet precise emotions or, as I prefer to think, call down among us certain disembodied powers, whose footsteps over our hearts we call emotions; and when sound, and colour, and form are in a musical relation, a beautiful relation to one another, they become, as it were, one sound, one colour, one form, and evoke emotion that is made out of their distinct evocations and yet is one emotion (pp.156-7).

This crucial passage to a large extent represents Yeats's idea of symbolism. Yeats discusses his theory on the level of "art as symbol," rather than "symbols in art." He seems to wish to tell us four things. First, symbols come from a tangible, sensuous world. This points to a fundamental issue in the theory of art, namely, why emotion has to be conveyed through external objects. Yeats's answer is "because an emotion does not exist, or does not become perceptible and active among us, till it has found its expression in colour or in sound or in form or in all of these" (p.157). This sounds to me to have foreshadowed the Croce-Collingwood theory of art which equates art with expression. It is the nature of art to be material and tangible: Art works with matter, with sound, colour and form, and its end is expression which is artifact itself. For Yeats, sounds, colours and forms serve as perceptible "correspondences" of otherwise imperceptible emotions. When the correspondence is found, the expression is worked out and the artifact made.

Second, the use of symbols does not aim at conveying messages or even expressing feelings, but *evoking* "indefinable and yet precise emotions." The indefinable nature of emotion accounts partly for the indefiniteness of symbolic reference, which makes the symbol far more mysterious and potent than allegory. For Yeats, symbols evoke precise emotions, because they are able to call down among us "certain disembodied powers." This "disembodied power," to my understanding, is not very different from what Poe calls the poetic effect. Third, for Yeats, poetry as symbol should have the beauty of harmonious totality. A work of art may consist of heterogeneous sounds and colours and shapes; yet it is expected to give the effect of one sound, one colour and one form. This effect of unity is achieved through the arrangements of various parts, various elements of the poem. They are designed to form a "musical relation" so that the whole poem, as Mallarmé puts it, will "yield a total rhythmic movement" and become "a muted concert of its own."[175] Finally, Yeats contends that colours, sounds and forms are able to act as symbols "either because of their pre-ordained energies or because of long association." It seems to me that here Yeats simply tries to explain the diversity of symbols. As has been mentioned, Yeats holds that there is traditional symbolism and personal symbolism. A poet who "delights in a traditional symbolism" would use symbols which affect "because of their pre-ordained energies"; whereas a poet who "delights in a personal symbolism" would resort to symbols which affect "because of long association." However, J. Hillis Miller has detected from the above-quoted passage "a wavering in meaning." He argues, "To say all sounds, all colours, all forms evoke precise emotion 'either because of their pre-ordained energies or because of long association' is to propose two radically different alternatives. If it is 'because of their preordained energies' then some god or the inalterable nature of things has given symbols their power to generate a particular emotion. If it is because of long association, then the symbol is man-made and arbitrary."[176]

Is it a fact that in art, as Yeats says, there are conventional or public symbols as well as personal or private symbols? These two kinds of symbols, at

first glance, may seem to be, as Miller puts it, "two radically different alternatives." But after a second thought, one would find they are not hopelessly irreconcilable. Abrams has pointed out, "Some symbols are 'conventional' or 'public'; thus 'the Cross,' 'The Red, White and Blue,' 'the Good Shepherd' are terms that signify symbolic objects of which the further significance is determinate with a particular culture." These conventional symbols certainly possess "preordained energies" which, within a certain culture, evoke particular significance. Abrams goes on to say that poets also use private or personal symbols. "Often they do so by exploiting pre-existing and widely shared associations of certain concepts with an object or event or action." That is to say, this kind of symbols affect with their "long association." Abrams also says that there are "some poets" who "often use symbols whose significance they generate mainly for themselves."[177] "Some poets" also use traditional symbols but they use them to generate significance for themselves. In such cases, we may say they have personalized those traditional symbols. Abrams' example of Blake's "rose" is precisely such a personalized traditional symbol. In Blake's famous poem, the traditional symbolic meaning of rose is not completely eradicated but is compounded with Blake's personal feelings and significance so that its connotation has been greatly enriched.

Yeats may be counted as one of those whom Abrams calls "some poets." In his essay "Symbolism in Painting," Yeats states a disagreement he had with a German symbolist painter. Yeats says the painter "would not put even a lily, or a rose, or a poppy into a picture to express purity, or love, or sleep, because he thought such emblems were allegorical and had their meaning by a traditional and not by a natural right." The German painter is obviously affected by the bad reputation of allegory and Yeats tries to convince him that "the rose, and the lily, and the poppy were so married, by their colour and their odour and *their use*, to love and purity and sleep, and had been so long a part of the imagination of the world, that *a symbolist might use them to help out his meaning without becoming an*

allegorist."[178] Again Miller accuses Yeats of vacillation in meaning. To a great poet like Yeats, this is a serious accusation. However, to my understanding, Yeats is merely trying to make two points: first, traditional symbols like rose, lily and poppy, may also have their meaning by a "natural right," because of their colour, odour and use; second, a symbolist might use these traditional symbols to generate significance for himself, "to help out his meaning." There seems to be no vacillation in meaning here. Miller has simply confused the meanings of the two "uses" that appear in Yeats's text when he makes the following comments:

> "To say that the rose, the lily, and the poppy are 'married' by their color and odor and use to their abstract meaning is to affirm the notion of 'natural right'" the German wants. To say it is by 'use' makes that marriage of object and meaning arbitrary, manmade; 'traditional' and not 'natural'. Yeats's three nouns 'colour', 'odour' and 'use' are a heterogeneous series. [179]

It seems to me that the first "use" is in the sense of value or utility of an object which, like colour and odour, is a natural property. As in the case of poppy, it may be believed to have a function similar to that of sleeping pills (because of its association with opium); hence, it becomes a symbol of sleep "by natural right."[180]

It is, however, not Miller's accidental carelessness that makes him misread ("every reading is a misreading"?) an unequivocal passage. While setting forth the accusations, Miller has an axe to grind. He wants to prove "The equivocations of prose match the equivocations of the poetry," and further to prove his language theory of deconstruction: "They are part of continuous web of language which is always forced to say the opposite of what it seems to want to say, as well as the opposite of that opposite."[181] And finally, he also wants to show that the text has already annihilated the ground on which the building of a literary work stands. For the great cause of deconstruction Yeats has to plead guilty for his "vacillation in meaning."

Melchiori may also have missed the point when he asserts that the rose, the lily and the poppy were "mainly sentimental: he (Yeats) was fond of these simple emblems [...] mainly because he attributed to single emblematic patterns specific

powers which have nothing to do with literary and artistic symbolism."[182] This is indeed an even worse misunderstanding. As has been explained, Yeats is here discussing symbols and symbolism in general by citing those flowers as examples; he is not discussing the symbolic meanings of those flowers in particular. He starts with correcting the German by showing that the rose, lily and poppy are all at the same time both traditional and natural symbols by their colour, odour and use, and then argues that the fact that they are traditional symbols does not necessarily imply that they are being used in repugnant allegory. They "had been so long a part of the imagination of the world," that the past has conferred beauty and richness upon them. A symbolist might use them, that is to say, manipulate them, enlarge them, invest them with fresh associations and turn them into a mixture of the virtues of mystery with the assurance of old directions, so as to "help out his meaning without becoming an allegorist."

This point is crucial because it constitutes one of the salient features of Yeats's symbolism which appears so different from French symbolism. His poems are full of what we have called "personalized traditional symbols." They are largely drawn from Irish legends and Celtic folklore, as well as from the occult. Symbols such as rose, cross, swan, water, tree, moon and sun are all what Yeats calls "ancient symbols," which have come down to us through a hundred generations. "We are far from having exhausted the significance of the few symbols we use," said Emerson a long time ago.[183] This view is certainly shared by Yeats who says in his essay on Shelley (1900): "it is only by ancient symbols, by symbols that have numberless meanings beside the one or two the writer lays an emphasis upon, or the half-score he knows of, that any highly subjective art can escape from the barrenness and shallowness of a too conscious arrangement, into the abundance and depth of Nature."[184]

There is universal consensus that Yeats was influenced by French symbolists and he himself acknowledged his debt to his French colleagues. But to what extent this influence has affected Yeats and his poetry is not an easy question to answer.

My speculation is that he found in the theories of his French contemporaries a confirmation of his own poetic practice as well as an affirmation of aesthetic ideas he had already accepted and, in some cases, expressed or suggested in his critical essays. On the other hand, his genius, together with his inadequate knowledge of the French language, make his symbolism rather a different species from French symbolism. His is deeply rooted in the tradition of English literature. "I own my soul to Shakespeare, to Spenser and to Blake, perhaps to William Morris, and to the English language in which I think, speak and write,"[185] Yeats said. Unlike Mallarmé and other major French Symbolists, he did not seek to cut off his symbols from tradition, from reality, from life and from this real world. He did not seek to "purify" the existing language so as to create a new one. Rather, he chose to make the best use of the language and cultural heritage that had come down to him from the remote past and to bring them into full play in the service of his time.

T.S. Eliot was another English poet who, while undeniably influenced by and greatly benefiting from the French symbolists, succeeded in developing a symbolism of his own. A major contribution he made to the theory of symbolism is to be seen in the doctrine of objective correlative which he introduced or, to be more exact, popularized. The *locus classicus* on the concept of objective correlative is in his essay on *Hamlet*:

> The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an "objective correlative"; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events, which shall be the formula of the *particular* emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked.... The artistic 'inevitability' lies in this complete adequacy of the external to the emotion; and this is precisely what is deficient in *Hamlet*. Hamlet (the man) is dominated by an emotion which is inexpressible, because it is in *excess* of the facts as they appear. And the supposed identity of Hamlet with his author is genuine to this point: that Hamlet's bafflement at the absence of an objective equivalent to his feelings is a prolongation of the bafflement of his creator in the face of his artistic problem.[186]

One would first be impressed by Eliot's sweeping tone in stating his ideas. "Objective correlative" is here described as not only a universal principle but also an exclusive one; not only one of the ways of expressing emotion, but "the only" way; not just a method of expression in poetry, but "in the form of art" in general. The meaning of the two key words "objective" and "correlative" seem to be quite clear. "Objective" is used here in the senses of sensuous, concrete and exterior to the mind, or simply in the sense of "external" by which Eliot twice replaces it. "Correlative" seems to be here synonymous with "equivalent" and "equivalence," each of which appears twice to be an alternative for "correlative."

It is perhaps extraordinary that Eliot should have derived his symbolic theory from drama rather than poetry. According to him, the play *Hamlet* is a failure, and the failure lies in the fact that Hamlet the man is dominated by what Eliot variously described as "an emotion which is inexpressible, because it is in *excess* of the facts as they appear," "an emotion which can find no outlet in action." Eliot further makes an identification between Shakespeare and Hamlet so that the whole point becomes that the failure of the play is Shakespeare's failure to find an adequate "objective correlative" for Hamlet's excessive emotions. Because of this deficiency, Hamlet (along with Shakespeare) cannot understand his own emotion. All these seem quite clear; nevertheless there are ambiguities that require explanation.

Eliot contends that "when the external facts... are given, the emotion is immediately evoked." Whose "particular emotion" is it, one may ask? Generally speaking, there can be three possibilities: that of the poet, that of the reader or that of the persona which represents a third party. Considering that it is within the context of a discussion on a play that Eliot sets forth this theory, we may surmise that Eliot refers to the emotion of a third party, such as the emotion of Hamlet, the protagonist of the play.

Yet Vivas and Wimsatt and Brooks, who follow Vivas in this respect, assert that Eliot's theory seeks to arouse emotion in the reader.[187] Eliot may have

suggested that poetry should have an *effect* on the reader in other places.[188] But to emphasize the effect of a work of art upon the reader is not the same as to encourage the poet to deliberately design to arouse emotions in the reader as in the case of a pragmatic theory. In his essay on *Hamlet*, Eliot is not found to be indicating that the objective correlative necessarily involves the reader, that it is designed to enable the reader to be emotionally aroused. There is no evidence that Eliot believes that, while taking care of his own feelings, the poet should also keep an eye on the reader. In another essay, Eliot puts this issue very clearly:

> The poet does not aim to excite - that is not even a test of his success - but to set something down; the state of the reader is merely that reader's particular mood of perceiving what the poet has caught in words.[189]

Another possible question is: in what sense is an "objective correlative" objective? Eliot does not give an answer to this question. In my view, it is objective not simply because "concrete, sensory detail is used."[190] Those external objects of which the objective correlative consists can hardly be described as objective, since they are invariably under the influence of human feeling. As Davidson shows, "even a very referential image like 'the cry of the quail and the whirling plover'[191] is charged with a human consciousness of the object."[192] Rather, it is "objective" because Eliot prefers an impersonal manipulation of experience and also because modern poets "sought to make their poetry not so much an externalization of their own minds as the invitation of an external system of ideas."[193] And this, I believe, draws a clear distinction between the Romantic expressive theories of poetry and the poetics of modern poets.

Still another question which may be raised around the problem of objective correlative is: what precisely is the relationship between the sensuous correlatives and the emotion? And one may also ask: where and how are these correlatives to be found? Why is the "particular emotion" immediately evoked when certain correlatives are given? All these questions remain virtually unanswered in Eliot's essay on *Hamlet*, and he seldom mentions this concept in his later writings.

In another essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent," Eliot says, "The poet's mind is in fact a receptacle for seizing and storing up numberless feelings, phrases, images, which remain there until all the particles which can unite to form a new compound are present together."[194] This seems to have given us enough reason to believe that, according to Eliot, objective correlatives are taken directly from the receptacle of mind. Yet since there are "numberless feelings, phrases and images" in the receptacle, what causes one particular feeling or image to be chosen and taken out? Eliot's answer seems to be that it is taken for the sake of forming a new compound. But since no object or situation is in itself a 'formula' for an emotion, the question remains unanswered. A Chinese critic would perhaps give a quite different explanation. He would probably say that, in accordance with the theory of "gan yin" or "mutual resonance," a particular correlative is created and used in the poem because the object, the event or the action in question happens to have stimulated or affected the poet profoundly and to have given rise to his emotion which may have been stored within him for a long time.

There is yet another question to be asked: does Eliot's theory imply that a poet should try to find an objective correlative to express an emotion he knows very well in advance? Vivas thinks it does: "For feelings certainly do not wait in the mind like tobacco in a pouch till they can be used."[195] While I would agree that in Eliot's essay there are quite a few ambiguities, I would think it is unfair to criticize him for what he has not said. In his essay on *Hamlet*, Eliot argues that owing to the lack of an adequate equivalent for his feeling, Hamlet "cannot understand" it; "he cannot objectify it, and it therefore remains to poison life and obstruct action."[196] We cannot assume from these words that Eliot means Hamlet knows his own condition very well but only fails to find an objective correlative to express it; on the contrary, they show that Eliot believes that an objective correlative is not merely called for to convey a feeling known in advance but, first and foremost, it is to be found to help with the understanding of an obscure feeling. In this respect, A.P. Frank offers a better description of Eliot's theory than Vivas:

> (Eliot) delineates the creative process as follows: the poet has an 'emotion' - a state of inarticulate, possibly conflicting attitudes, appetences or, perhaps, impulses - and he does not understand it. In order to reach an understanding of this emotional state, he strives to find an adequate equivalent for it in a world of objects. Eliot assumes that, once it is found, it will immediately evoke that particular emotion... make it intelligible in terms of the world which the poet has found - and founded - in the poem.[197]

This is precisely what Eliot implies in his essay but fails to articulate. And this also comes very close to what Vivas himself spells out:

> the emotion expressed through the objective correlative is not that which the poet felt before the poem was written. The emotion as well as the correlative are *found* through the process of *creation*.[198]

It has been suggested that Eliot's concept of objective correlative arises from his concern for form and his dissatisfaction with what can be called "romantic formlessness." Eliot writes, "Swinburne's form is uninteresting, because he is literally saying next to nothing."[199] In another place, he speaks of Blake that his philosophy "makes him inclined to formlessness."[200] Formlessness results in vagueness and direct statement of feeling in poetry - two taboos in modern poetics. The remedy for these defects is exactly the objective correlative - "the only way of expressing emotion in the form of art."

For Eliot, form is not merely an external shape. He says, "To create a form is not merely to invent a shape, a rhyme or rhythm. It is also the realization of the whole appropriate content of this rhyme or rhythm."[201] That is to say what Eliot means by the form of a poem is not separable from the content of the poem; rather it is the manifestation or the embodiment of the content. It is the shape and matter in one. Since in Eliot's view, objective correlative is the only way of expressing an emotion in the form of art, it would be safe to say that objective correlative is also what Eliot means by form. Thus, objective correlative is intended ultimately as a remedy for what Eliot calls "the disassociation of sensibility" which, according to him, widely exists in the works of Romantic poets.[202]

Eliot first put forward his theory of objective correlative in 1919. Since then, there have been a great many speculations as to its sources.[203] Given the significant influence that French symbolism exerted on Eliot, it is quite beyond our expectations that very few have mentioned French symbolist poets as the probable source.[204] Taking all in all, I would suggest that there cannot be a single source for the doctrine. As to the term itself, the origin may be found in the lectures of Washington Allston (1779-1843), the American painter and critic. In terms of its philosophy, it can be traced back to German idealism, especially in Hegelian idealism; and in terms of a theory of literary creation, it derives mainly from the theory and practice of French symbolists. Eliot once recalled, "The kind of poetry that I needed, to teach me the use of my own voice, did not exist in English at all; it was only to be found in French."[205] ."..there was something to be learned from the French poets of the Symbolist Movement..."[206] It was Jules Laforgue who offered him a new voice. Eliot said that Laforgue "was the first to teach me how to speak, to teach me the poetic possibilities of my own idiom of speech."[207] However, the very fact that so many possible sources have been suggested shows that this doctrine is by no means any single person's invention, nor is it an isolated literary phenomenon. As a matter of fact, it has been identified as a "New England commonplace."[208] Because of the most extraordinary universality it possesses, I would propose to call it an "international commonplace." Krishna Rayan has convincingly shown that objective correlative is also a central formulation in Sanskrit aesthetics.[209] In Chinese poetic tradition, it seems that objective correlative has always been an established fact - the description of a scene to evoke an emotion or a state of mind can be seen throughout the history of Chinese poetry. However, considering the issue from the Chinese perspective, one always feels that something is missing in Eliot's theory. In his essay "The Three Voices of Poetry," Eliot elaborates his view of the creative process. It seems that he looks at the process as the poet's contemplation of himself only; hence, it is not clear when and how the

external facts, those "objects, a situation, a chain of events" intrude on the poet's contemplation.

In his recent essay "The French Symbolists," Chadwick claims that objective correlative as advocated by T.S.Eliot is an equivalent to the symbol.[210] Generally speaking, this is correct. However, it does not mean that this concept has no significance of its own. Eliot's objective correlative, as can be seen in his poetic works, to a large extent, differs from French symbolism. French Symbolists often make use of conventional and traditional symbols; whereas Eliot seldom resorts to these symbols. Unlike French symbolism, Eliot's symbols, as a rule, give the impression that they are directly taken from his personal experience. His early poems are closely linked with those cities in the real world such as St. Louis, Boston, London and Paris where he actually lived. His skill in putting proper names into poems is next to none. His symbols are not *rêveri* or *délires*; they sound real and look real. This is perhaps because Eliot adopted a descriptive attitude toward his creation but that was an evocative description, not the description Mallarmé had repudiated. Although he was a master of making metaphor, it is often those symbols derived from contiguity that we find most impressive and striking. And we should not forget that he was also the advocator of the impersonal theory. As a result of an effective combination of these two theories, his symbols, instead of evoking an individual's private emotion or state of mind, often represent a typical psychology which does not belong to one particular person but belongs to a kind of people, or even belongs to a society in general. Hence his symbolism is somewhat similar to the "type" in the theory of realism. It is not, of course, a kind of social realism represented by Dickens or Balzac. Rather, it may be called psychological realism and T.S.Eliot well deserves the name of "a great psychological realist," who "explored not merely the mind and the emotions, but the nerves of contemporary urban man with an insight which was undreamed of in French poetry before him."[211] Therefore, his poems, rather than detached from the real world and the real life, are full of the spirit of social criticism. That is why we feel that his

poems, compared with those of his French predecessors, have a wider perspective and on the whole are more forceful.

III. *Xing* and Symbolism

6. *Fu*, *Bi*, *Xing* Vs. Sign, Allegory and Symbol

Saussure said, "Arbitrary and differential are two correlative qualities." Schleiermacher said, "All concepts proceed from contrasts."[1] These statements are very helpful in our effort to clarify such a controversial concept as the *xing*. A term is used not according to its "inherent" meaning but according to its relationship with other terms of its category, especially its difference from other terms. In the Chinese theories of poetry, the three terms *fu*, *bi* and *xing* have formed a triadic group of concepts of literary criticism. Each relates to the others in a context, each is distinct from the others and at the same time depends on the distinctions as its *raison d'étre*. This should be a basic principle which will remain valid no matter whoever uses these terms and however he uses them. Therefore to further our study of the import of the term *xing* we need to observe it through a comparison with the *fu* and the *bi*.

Since each of the three terms covers many different meanings and each operates on different levels, we need to make sure that the comparison be carried out on the same level. Northrop Frye has observed, "the criticism of literature can hardly be a simple or one level activity."[2] One of the reasons why the study of the *xing* has appeared very confusing is exactly because it has been treated as a "one level activity." In the context of literary criticism, the meanings of these three terms may be stratified on four levels: 1. as three rhetorical devices; 2. as three modes of writing; 3. as three aesthetic tendencies; and 4. as three ways of interpretation.

In the Western tradition, there have been a great deal of terms similar in their functions to the Chinese triplet, such as symbol, allegory, emblem, icon, trope, metaphor, sign, myth and image. Each of them also covers many different meanings. Morton Bloomfield has declared, "To separate these senses is almost a superhuman task."[3] In fact, there have been many critics who have used these terms indiscriminately, especially: sign, allegory and symbol.[4] Yet at the same time, we have noticed that both in Chinese and Western traditions, there have always been as many critics trying to distinguish these terms. It seems to me that the efforts to distinguish these terms should be made not for the sake of distinguishing, but for knowing them better. A theory of these concepts will be formulated only after these terms are properly differentiated and their respective uses are well defined.

6.1 As Poetic Techniques

On the first level, the *fu*, *bi* and *xing* are taken merely as three poetic techniques or, in a larger sense, as three rhetorical devices. On this level, Zhu Xi's definition best expresses the distinctions between them:

> The *fu* means to set forth a situation diffusely and directly. The *bi* means to make a comparison between one thing and another. The *xing* means to mention other things first so as to introduce what is going to be chanted next.[5]

Zhu first distinguishes the *fu* from the *bi* and *xing* by describing the *fu* as a straightforward exposition without involving the use of figures of speech or resorting to evocation. He also emphasizes that in the *fu* it is usually a "situation" that is presented rather than a "thing" as in the cases of the *bi* and *xing*. When he defines the *xing* he uses the words "other things" to imply that those things

mentioned first have no apparent relations with what follows. On another occasion, he puts it bluntly by saying that "the *xing* lines of a poem have no semantic relations whatsoever with other lines."[6] On the level of these terms denoting three different rhetorical devices, it is possible to distinguish them clearly. His weakness lies in confining the role of the *xing* to the introduction of what is to follow. As a result *xing* can only occur at the beginning of a poem. But even in the *Shi jing*, there are poems in which the *xing* lines appear in the middle of a poem, such as poem no.66:

66.1 My lord has gone on an expedition of war,
I do not know for how long;
when will he come?
The fowls roost in their wall-holes,
it is the evening of the day;
the sheep and oxen are coming down,
the lord has gone on an expedition of war
how could I but think (of him)?
(Karlgren, p.45).

A wife's thoughts of her campaigning husband are evoked by the home-going animals in the twilight. Xu Fuguan is right when he says that this is an example of those poems in which the *xing* lines are placed in the middle of a stanza.[7]

To discuss the three terms on this level, one regards them as elements of a poem, without considering the poem as a whole. On this level they are comparable to the Western concepts of sign and the symbol. Some Western critics' views on the distinctions between the sign, trope and symbol may be summarized as follows:[8]

Signs are arbitrary; whereas symbols are motivated. "They (symbols) are not empty configurations. They show at least a vestige of natural connexion between the signal and its signification."[9] Signs have a simple signification; whereas symbols have a double one.[10] While the sign represents an object, symbols evoke semantic plurality.[11] The meaning of the sign is rather specific, while that of the symbol is more subjective and personal,[12] Signs are schematic and abstract, and

they point not to themselves, but to what is not present, while a symbol is more like a picture. It does not disappear behind its pointing function but, in its own being, shares in what it represents.[13] Understanding signs does not involve interpretation, while understanding symbols does.[14]

Let us now read a tiny Chinese poem to see whether it is possible to put the above distinctions into practice to any extent.

> Five years on the river damaged my facial colour,
> Today spring breeze has come to Wuguan.
> Two letters from the capital were perused by the water;
> Small peach trees in flower all over Mt. Shang.[15]

The third line of this poem comprises words that may be taken as pure signs. "Letters" refer to the object of letters; "capital" to the object of the capital in the real world; "water" to the water on which the poet's boat floats. All these details are historically true and there seems to be no double signification involved. The other lines, however, are a mixture of signs and symbols. "Five years" may be just a sign, denoting a fact; but "on the river" does not merely mean literally that the poet has been living on the river or the river area for five years; rather, it also serves as a symbol of life in exile as *jiang hu* 江湖 or "the river and the lake" is an antithesis of the *wei que* 魏闕 or the imperial court. Living under adverse conditions, the poet's "facial colour" (*rong yan* 容顏 ,) has been damaged, but it is not just the physical *rong yan*, but the spiritual *rong yan* i.e. one's mental condition or dignity, reputation, etc. that has suffered damage. So another double signification is here involved. "Today" and "Wuguan" may well refer to a truth of the time and place; but "spring breeze" obviously bears double meanings: the spring breeze in the natural world and the "spring breeze" - a pardon from the emperor or good tidings in general - in the human world. "Spring breeze" is the wind of life in the natural world as well as in the human world. It speeds the

blossom of the peach tree and, as it were, gives the poet a second life. Thus those objects - the spring breeze and peach flowers are not merely referential signs only but evocative symbols as well. And they are authentic symbols at that if we follow Wellek and Warren's definition that the symbol is "an object which refers to another object but which demands attention also in its own right."[16] The last line is an excellent example of objective correlative - a strong emotion expressed through external correlates, which are not so much sought after as "picked up" by the poet when his feelings are fused with outside scenes. The external object in this line is virtually dissolved, while the poet's feeling is exhilarated by the beautiful spring scene.

The ending lines of Coleridge's poem "Frost at Midnight" have a similar effect:

> Or if the secret ministry of frost
> Shall hang them up in silent icicles,
> Quietly shining to the quiet moon.

This is not only beautiful in itself, but also reflects the inner world of the poet; for the moon here serves as a symbol of illumination, mental and spiritual. The poet's enhanced feeling of joy and peace and understanding which have developed through the poem along with the poet's meditation are exquisitely expressed in that final image of the icicles and the moon. This is a *xing*.

However, there are differences. The differences lie not so much in that in Yuan's poem, the scene is real or intended to be real, whereas in Coleridge's the scene is imaginary as that in the former, the beauty remains an embodiment, an external sensuous equivalence of the poet's emotion whereas in the latter, the beauty has become truth. Another detectable difference is: in the former, the image is picked up from what meets the eye. In the latter, it is a result of long and deep meditation. So in the former, we see a "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings;" in the latter, we see "emotion recollected in tranquillity."

The *bi* and the *xing* cause more confusion as they may both involve the comparison between similarities of different things. Because of this common point, there is no absolute clear-cut distinction between the *bi* and the *xing*. Kong Yingda asserted, "The more obscure ones of the *bi* are called *xing*; the less obscure ones of the *xing* are called *bi*. The *bi* and the *xing* are distinguished by the degree of their obscurity."[17] The difference between the *bi* and the *xing* is comparable to that between the trope and the symbol. For a trope, resemblance is indispensable, while for a symbol, it is not. Sometimes it is contiguity rather than resemblance that constitutes the essential property of the symbol. For this reason the symbol relies more on association and evocation than the trope. In the trope when one says A is like B (in a simile) or A is B (in a metaphor), he also implies that A is not B. Therefore in the trope there can be only one kind of meaning i.e. the figurative one, whereas in the symbol there can be two kinds of meanings simultaneously. In other words, the trope cannot be taken literally, while the symbol can be taken both literally and metaphorically. While in the trope, both sides of the comparison are explicitly displayed, in the symbol, only one side will appear in the text.[18] Tropes are linguistic phenomena, while symbols are interpretative ones. Hence Liu Xie said, "(In the *xing*,) one has to invoke the annotations to make (the text) intelligible."[19] Another important distinction is: in the trope repetitions are to be avoided, while in the symbol, repetitions are encouraged so as to call for attention to its significance. Wellek and Warren have spoken of the "recurrence and persistence of the 'symbol'" as the primarily important sense on which "symbol" differs from "image" and "metaphor."[20]

The use of different devices gives rise to different effect. To praise a person's poem, for example, one can either employ the technique of the *fu* or the sign as Du Fu did when he wrote, "Every poem of Xie Tiao's is worth chanting;"[21] or use the *bi* or the trope as Han Yu did when he wrote, "Your poems are varied in manner, hazy as clouds in a spring sky;"[22] or employ the *xing* or the symbolic as Li Bai did when he wrote, "I chant Xie Tiao's verses; soughing, the north wind blows

flying rain."[23] Du Fu's lines are a direct statement. Han Yu's are a metaphor. Li Bai's lines contain an object for reflection. It is to be understood that those natural phenomena are described not to record the meteorological situation but to evoke a feeling of the poet which arises in him when he chants Xie's poems. The symbolic effect is given through a juxtaposition.

Stark juxtaposition is a common practice in Chinese symbolic poems, and perhaps is also one of the most important. Wherever the *Mao zhuan* says "xing ye," we have a juxtaposition between an image of nature objects and a human situation. Through juxtaposition a secondary motivation is given to an image and turns the image into a symbol.

6.2 As Modes of Writing

As has been said, according to the Chinese theory, a poem comes about when the poet is influenced, inspired by what meets his eye. In this sense the *xing* dissociates itself from the *bi* and the *fu*; that is to say, all poetry, at least poetry worth the name, comes from the *xing*. As Wang Changling said, "From ancient times literature has arisen from non-action and from being evoked by Nature, forming itself in response to stimulus without ornament or embellishment. Words are produced to be fitting and they are appropriate when they respond to the objects (external world)."[24]

It is a general rule of poetry-making that, as the *Da xu* describes, "When emotions stir inside, they become manifest in speech." However, the process of manifestation involves the *fu*, *bi* and *xing* - three different modes of writing. Li Zhongmeng of the Song dynasty defines these three terms as follows,

> To describe things and express emotions is called *fu*, in which things and emotions are both fully conveyed. To search for things and commit emotions to them is called *bi*, in which emotions are attached to things. To be emotionally evoked on contact with things is called *xing*, in which things stir emotions.[25]

His definition has the merit of describing the three different modes of creation by way of three different relationships between man and the external world, and between his feelings and the object. This notion has touched two fundamental issues in poetic creation. First, poetic creation starts from and ends up in the evocation of human feelings and emotions and relies on the object as the medium. Second, the mode of writing poetry is determined by the mode of perception of the poet. The three different modes of poetic creation originate in three different modes of perception. To distinguish these three different modes of writing is to distinguish the three different modes of perception.

In the *fu*, the poet's attention is focused either on the object or on his emotion. He either concentrates on the description of an object and the narration of an event or on the expression of his feelings and emotions. In his reflection and description of the object his emotion arises and is put into words in a straightforward way. The object or the external world dominates and the poet is preoccupied with an urge to present it in an artistic way, while his emotion is allowed to be expressed without any concealment. Take poem no.62 of the *Shi jing*:

62.1 Bo is so brave,
A hero in our state!
Grasping his lance,
He fights in the king's vanguard.

62.2 Since Bo went to the east
My hair has been unkempt as wind-blown thistle.
It is not that I have no hair-oil,
But for whom should I want to beautify myself?

62.3 Let it rain, let it rain!
But instead the sun shines bright.
I keep longing for Bo,
Heedless of my aching head.

62.4 Where can I find the herb of forgetfulness
To plant behind the house?
I keep longing for Bo,
Though it makes me sick at heart.[26]

Like Robert Burns' song-lyric "A Red, Red Rose," this piece is a straightforward declaration of affection. The overall effect of the poem is of a flow

of pure feeling, but feeling under control of the description of a situation. Obviously it is not the total absence of simile, metaphor and symbol that makes this poem a *fu*. It is the way of telling the story and the way of expressing the speaker's feelings and emotions that makes it a *fu*. Here lies the difference between the *fu* as a mere literary technique and the *fu* as a mode of perceiving and writing. The poem is centred on a situation, a fact, and the speaker's reflection of the situation and the fact also gives rise to emotion. All these are expressed directly and fully within the text. This is what Li Zhongmeng meant when he said that in the *fu* "things and emotions are both fully conveyed."

The truth of the object and the situation constitutes a salient feature of the *fu*. Chinese critics tend to consider the *fu* as "shi zuo 實作," or "literal, factual or referential writing" in the sense that it usually involves real things and real people. As to the *bi* and *xing*, they would say they are both "xu zuo 虛作," or "figurative, fictional or non-referential writing," in the sense that they do not necessarily refer to real things or real people, and they are not to be understood literally.[27]

In the *bi*, the poet first has an emotion, an idea to convey. He is therefore committed to search for a fitting image to communicate his emotion or idea through an intellectual effort. The process of searching turns out to be also a process of explaining the emotion and thought, as well as the process of examining the sought-after image. The image he uses does not as a rule point to a real world. He may certainly employ objects that actually exist, but he is not interested so much in the objects themselves as in the possible properties they may represent. Hence the objects in the poem of the *bi* cannot be taken literally as they can in the case of the *fu*. They are merely "figures." Take poem no.113 of the *Shi jing*:

113.1 You shi-rats, you shi-rats
do not eat our millet!
Three years we have served you,
but you have not been willing to (look at =) heed us;
it has gone so far that we will leave you;
We go to that happy land;
oh, happy land, happy land!

Then we shall find our place.
(Karlgren, p.73.)

Having been disgusted by someone in power who is greedy, uncaring and insensitive, one borrows a rat and uses it as an object of castigation. This is what Liu Xie said, "The *bi* means an explicit expression of an accumulated indignation." He also said, "Although there are numerous things available in the right category, the best should have the aptness of representation."[28] What he means by "accumulated indignation" refers to strong feelings stored in the depth of one's heart. What he means by "aptness of representation" requires that the objects employed are to be fitting and appropriate to the innermost feelings. Feelings come first and the feelings in such cases are clear enough for the poet to translate into concrete imagery by searching and selecting analogical objects. Such a creative process is one of discursive perception, where "feeling waits upon thought."[29] That is the mode of the *bi*, in which the poem is considered as a whole, differing from the *bi* as a rhetorical device. The *bi* on this level is comparable to the Western concept of allegory.

The mode of the *xing* is quite different. Liu Xie said, "The *xing* means to evoke; ... to evoke emotions, one formulates his ideas in subtle language." The poet's emotion is aroused by external objects, resulting in strong impulse of creation; it also grows and clarifies through the poet's observation and reflection of the external world and its images. In such a mode ideas do not precede imagery and form. Wang Changling said that poetry "arises from non-action and starts from Nature/the natural." He denies the pre-determined idea. Ye Xie said, "In poetry, the thought is obscure, the situation imaginary and the emotion nebulous."[30] Therefore the poet has to explore his own emotion and thought through "cruising with the object" and "roaming with the mind" as Liu Xie put it. The growth and the clarification of the poet's emotion and thought synchronizes with the progress of the creative process. So Xie Zhen said, "A poem is accomplishd while you are wielding the brush. This is the *xing*."[31]

It is perhaps a common misunderstanding that the business of the poet is to use language as an instrument to communicate a thought or an emotion known in advance. Rather, with the mode of the *xing*, what the poet tries to do is to create with language a poetic reality which represents his aesthetic experience and serves as an object for contemplation. It is in and through the contemplation of this virtual reality that the poet receives aesthetic evocation and attains epiphany. Tao Yuanming (365-427) has these lines,

> Plucking chrysanthemums under the east hedge,
> (I) see the south mountain in the distance.
> Mountain air becomes excellent at sunset,
> Flying birds are going back together.
> In all these lies the True Meaning;
> (I) try to tell but forget the word.[32]

This is what may be called a poem created out of the perception of the *xing* mode. The scene in sight is accepted as an object for reflection and immediately becomes a revelation of hidden things, in which the physical objects are perceived as expressions of an underlying eternal spirit - the Tao, or in Tao Yuanming's own words, the "True Meaning." Such a meaning is impossible to explain in words. The only way to apprehend it is perhaps to present the whole scene once more and to live and re-live the poet's experience; for the meaning is inseparable from what is seen.

In terms of the modes of expression, Li Zhongmeng's definitions have spelled out the differences of the *fu*, *bi* and *xing*. The *fu* is concerned with both the description of an object and the expression of human emotions; neither of these two aspects is dispensable. While description of an object means the employment of diffuse language, the expression of human emotion means direct statement.

The *bi*, as a mode of writing, according to Li, means "to search for things and commit feelings to them." Li is very careful about the use of words. His use of the word *suo* or "to search" implies that in the *bi* the poet would strain after something lying beyond the confines of experience, and seek to approximate to a

presentation of rational concepts (i.e. intellectual ideas), thus giving to these concepts the semblance of an objective reality. His use of the word *tuo* or "to commit," "to trust," to use something as a surrogate for an idea, on the other hand, reveals that what he means by *bi* is concerned with the overall structure of a poem, rather than the sporadic use of rhetorical devices such as simile and metaphor. Before Li, Jiao Ran had already noted that "In the *bi*, exterior images are taken as a whole to give rise to an idea."[33] He also considered the poem as a whole.

Li uses two words *chu* or "contact" and *qi* or "evoke" to characterize the *xing*. Differing from the intentional search for images as in the case of the *bi*, *chu* implies incidental and unintentional exposure to the external influence. The relationship between the object and the emotion thus arising is not, as in the case of the *bi*, artificially designed, but spontaneously established. *Qi* means to evoke, to suggest and to intimate, rather than to tell, to state or to show. Hence the difference between the *fu*, *bi* and *xing* as three modes of writing may be comparable to that between direct statement, allegory and symbolism.

E.M.Tillyard has suggested that poems can be direct or oblique, although all poetry is "more or less oblique."[34] What he means by poetry of statement, in his view, has three "virtues": First, it is a kind, in which "the standard of craft is peculiarly evident." It is evident because such poetry is easier to read, so that the mind of the reader "has the more leisure to be conscious of the medium." Secondly, poems of statement "provide the proper foil to their subtle colleagues or to any more subtle writing." Thirdly, "the poetry of statement has had a clearer social function than much poetry of a higher order; it deals naturally with the normal psychology of social man."[35] These descriptions apply very well to the Chinese poems written in the style of the *fu*. Du Fu and Bai Juyi, for example, when they wrote poems of social observation, usually wrote in the mode of the *fu*.

"The poetry of statement," Tillyard went on to say, "can do no more than acquiesce in and restate the existing forms of the great commonplaces. But the small commonplaces, the more quotidian of the human passions, pass easily into

direct statement."[36] We also see quotidian passions pass easily into the following poem written by Bai Juyi with the title "Homesick in Handan on the Eve of the Winter Solstice":

> The Winter Solstice arrives when I stay in an inn of Handan,
> Clasping my knees before a lamp I am accompanied by my shadow.
> (I) imagine at home my family are sitting up into the late night,
> Talking about the traveller in the distant land.[37]

This is a *fu*; this is a poem of direct statement. It is easy to read, and it speaks of a "small commonplace" - homesickness. Yet the most salient feature of this kind of poem is its literalness, its relation to reality. The words in the poem, all pointing to the actual world, are completely referential and historically true as the title has revealed. This is a point that distinguishes the *fu* from the *bi* and the *xing* as we have said the *bi* and the *xing* are largely fictional or non-referential.

However, in terms of the two major functions of language - to express the known and to explore the unknown, *bi* or allegory and *fu* or direct statement have no essential difference. They are both modes of expressing the known. Thus Tillyard remarked, "Allegory is an elaborate form of direct statement: it is a simple substitution designed to stimulate the reader by making him take a little or a great deal of trouble to get at the statement."[38]

The *xing* or symbolism is quite different. In modern Western history, it was principally German thinkers who started to distinguish between allegory and symbolism on the level of two different modes of writing. According to Goethe, the difference lies in the procedure of creation: whether it is from the universal to the particular or from the particular to the universal. If the former is followed, the result will be allegory and if the latter is the case, the result will be symbolism. Around the same time, Schelling defined allegory as the representation in which "the particular means the universal or in which the universal is intuited through the particular." And he defined the symbolic as the representation in which "neither the universal means the particular nor the particular the universal, but rather are absolutely one."[39] Schelling then proceeded to claim that symbols, unlike allegory,

"are treated not at all as beings that are supposed to mean or signify something but rather as *real* beings that *are* simultaneously that which they signify."[40] He put the stress on the oneness of being and meaning in symbolism. A more or less similar idea was later expressed by Hegel in this way: "the symbol is no purely arbitrary sign, but a sign which in its externality comprises in itself at the same time the content of the idea which it brings into appearance."[41] Hence, in the symbolic, "meaning and sensuous representation, inner and outer, matter and form are in that event no longer distinct from one another;" and announce themselves as "*one* whole in which the appearance has no other essence, the essence no other appearance, outside or alongside itself."[42]

Yet there is another point made by Goethe which is equally important. Goethe said,

> Allegory transforms the phenomenon into a concept, the concept into an image, but in such a way that the concept always remains bounded in the image, and is entirely to be kept and held in it, and to be expressed by it.
> Symbolism [however] transforms the phenomenon into idea, the idea into an image, and in such a way that the idea remains always infinitely active and unapproachable in the image, and even if expressed in all languages, still would remain inexpressible.[43]

In appearance, the difference between allegory and symbolism seems to have been reduced to that between the concept and the idea. But this is far from an insignificant difference. Allegory alludes to a concept which remains bounded in the image, and is, to borrow Yeats's words, "nailed to one meaning." Symbolism is related to an idea which, as Goethe here uses it, means a productive activity. It is the mean*ing* rather than the meant of a poem. For Goethe such an idea is "always infinitely active and unapproachable." It has to be explored through the act of expression as George Vanor said, "The task of the Symbolist poet seems to be to discover the idea through its representation; to grasp the connections between the visible, tangible things of this world and the intelligible essence of which they partake."[44] J.H. van der Hoop also said, "Symbols are the chief means by which

the human mind expresses, not so much those ideas which it has outgrown, or wishes to conceal, but those which it has not yet mastered."[45]

It has become clear that the thought the symbol wishes to express does not exist in advance but relies on the symbol to discover and to clarify. This idea can be traced back at least as early as Coleridge, who said:

> The symbolical cannot perhaps be better defined in distinction from the Allegorical, ... Of most importance to our present subject is this point, that the latter (allegory) cannot be other than spoken consciously; - whereas in the former (the symbol) it is very possible that the general truth may be unconsciously in the writer's mind during the construction of the symbol; and it proves itself by being produced out of his own mind,...[46]

So to Coleridge and to Chinese critics alike, in the *bi* or the allegorical, there is always an attempt to categorize logical orders first and fit them to appropriate objects or situations, to set forth ideas first and then to encode them with concrete forms; whereas in the *xing* or the symbol, the mind perceives the rational order of things by intuition. But there is also a significant difference. For Chinese critics, intuition comes from an interplay between the poet and his environment and, in consequence, the poet has to pursue the symbol directly in the outside world. For Coleridge, the symbol comes entirely out of the mind without any extrapolation from the phenomena of the material world. The making of the symbol is a "dominance of the mind." Difference of this nature between the *fu*, *bi* and *xing* inevitably leads to the study of their different aesthetic values.

6.3 As Aesthetic Tendencies

The aesthetic qualities of the *fu* as Zheng Xuan describes them in his definitions of the three terms are directness and diffuseness. Yet Zheng's definitions are first seen in his annotations to the *Zhou li*, where the *fu*, *bi* and *xing* are treated as three ancient ways of speaking, persuading and especially offering opinions and presenting criticism by quoting or using poems of the *Shi jing*. It is in Zhi Yu's writing that we find a characterisation of the aesthetic quality of the *fu* as a literary genre.

Zhi Yu followed the tradition which had started with Yang Xiong in dividing the *fu*-writings into two kinds: the *fu* of the *shi*-writers (詩 人) and the *fu* of the *ci*-writers (辭 人).[47] Yang Xiong had said that "the *fu* of the *shi*-writers are beautiful and canonical; whereas the *fu* of the *ci*-writers are beautiful and licentious."[48] What he meant by "the *fu* of the *shi*-writers" are the *fu*-writings made by poets who adhered to the supposedly symbolic tradition of the *Shi jing*, such as writings of Xun Kuang (313-238 B.C.) and Qu Yuan. What he meant by "the *fu* of the *ci*-writers" refer in the main to writings by writers of the Han dynasty, especially those of Sima Xiangru (?-117 B.C.) and his like. Aesthetically speaking, being canonical means to be well disciplined and regulated in expression and presentation and to be licentious means to be extavagant, to be excessive in the use of description and decorative words. Zhi Yu argued that the essential difference between the two kinds of *fu* is that in "the *fu* of the *shi*-writers," feelings and meanings are the primary concern; whereas in "the *fu* of the *ci*-writers," it is things and events that are the dominant interest. This difference leads to different aesthetic tendencies. Zhi Yu observed, "When feelings and meanings are the primary concern, the language will be economical and the writing orderly. When things and events constitute the foundation of a work, the language will be diffuse and the writing will deviate from the norm."[49] According to him, diffuseness is the

characteristic of one kind of the *fu* rather than the *fu* in general. His points of view were shared by Liu Xie who devoted a whole chapter "Quan fu" of his book to the discussion of the *fu* as a literary genre. Liu concluded this chapter with these lines:

> The *fu* was derived from poetry
> And developed into several different forms.
> In describing objects and picturing appearances
> The richness of its patterns is like that of carving and painting;
> It casts lustre over the dull,
> And paints what is vast and immense in language that has no limitations.
> In style, its ultimate achievement is beauty under control,
> And its language is the result of the cutting out of weeds.[50]

His paradigm was "the *fu* of the *shi*-writers" and his ideal *fu*-writings should have the beauty comparable to that of carving and painting, but beauty under control. Liu did not discuss separately the *fu* as a principle of poetry, because he maintained that the *fu* as a literary genre and the *fu* as a principle were the same thing, so he said "fu tong."[51]

Unlike Liu Xie, Zhong Rong took up the five-word lyric which had reached its zenith in his time as the object of his observation. He treated the *fu* as one of the three principles of poetry along with the *bi* and the *xing*. The *fu* Liu Xie discussed belongs to the category of object language, referring to a literary genre. The *fu* Zhong Rong discussed belongs to the category of metalanguage, which possesses only relative meanings in comparison with the *bi* and the *xing*. Zhong wrote, "when affairs are recorded directly, the objective world being put into words, this is 'fu'." He went on to argue for a balanced use of all three without showing favour to any of them.

> If only the *bi* and the *xing* are used, poetry will suffer from obscurity of thought; and when thoughts are obscure, expression stumbles. If only the *fu* is employed, poetry will suffer from superficiality of thought; and when thoughts are superficial, writing will become loose, rambling and drifting without anchoring - it will be badly affected by prolixity.[52]

It seems that, although his object of observation is different, he has come to a similar conclusion to that of Zheng Xuan: the aesthetic hallmarks of the *fu* are directness, descriptiveness and diffuseness.

Since the mainstream in Chinese poetic tradition has always held that a good poem should be connotative rather than denotative, suggestive rather than descriptive, oblique rather than direct, and economical in the use of words rather than extravagant, these qualities of the *fu*, not at all surprisingly, have often been looked upon as weaknesses rather than strengths, and the *fu* has therefore been often treated as an inferior partner of the *bi* and the *xing*. Then a question inevitably arises: whether these hallmarks of the *fu* described by Zhong Rong and accepted universally have any positive values or whether a poem that deserves the name of poetry would be written in the mode of the *fu* at all. This has been a very controversial issue in the history of Chinese literature, which has an important bearing on the evaluation of a number of major poets, such as Du Fu and Bai Juyi.

Du Fu's poems have been highly praised for their merits in reflecting his era and acclaimed as the "shishi" or "poetry-history" since the Late Tang. On the other hand, the claim has been challenged and dismissed by other critics as confusing history and poetry. Yang Shen of the Ming dynasty argued that history and poetry have totally different functions and those poems of Du Fu written in the mode of the *fu* are his poorer ones.[53] His view was shared by Wang Fuzhi, who emphasized that "poetry cannot take the place of history just as the mouth cannot take the place of the eye." He accused some of Du Fu's poems of "having too much history but not enough of poetry," and ridiculed those who called Du's poems "poetry-history" as one who "having seen a camel, starts to complain that the horse does not have a swollen back."[54] This is not the place to carry on a discussion on the difference between history and poetry. But I would argue that there is a point in calling Du Fu's poems "poetry-history" without diminishing his greatness as a poet.

The point is that poetry need not always be implicit and oblique. Wang Shizhen, also a Ming critic, retorted Yang Shen's claim that poetry must be implicit, saying "What Yang talked about were all poems belonging to the *bi* and the *xing*. However, the *fu* is also an innate element of poetry which seeks pleasure in stating feelings and describing events. Poetry is not always obscure."[55]

Apparently these two different views of the *fu* are quite impossible to compromise. Yet I am convinced that they would agree with what Langer said in discussing Tillyard's notion of "direct statement":

> if direct statements occur in a good poem, their directness is a means of creating a virtual experience, a non-discursive form expressing a special sort of emotion or sensibility; that is to say, their use is poetic, even if they are bald assertion of fact.[56]

Now we can try to approach the notion of "shishi" or "poetry-history" from a different perspective: as far as the material of poetry is concerned, "shishi" has an element of history; but in view of the use of the material, "shishi" remains poetic and is certainly different from history. The last line of Yuan Chen's quatrain,which we have quoted above:

Small peach trees in flower all over Mt. Shan

is, or can be accepted as, historically true; but the use of those historical facts is certainly poetic. That determines what is a *fu* at one level of reading can be a *bi* or a *xing* at another. This would probably furnish an affirmative answer to the doubts raised a short time ago, that is, whether the aesthetic qualities of the *fu* have any positive values, and may perhaps lend us an approach to Du Fu's poems.

This also encourages us to reconsider the significance of those notions that are generally dismissed as confusing and unhelpful such as "fu er bi" or "the *fu* that is also the *bi*" and "fu er xing" or "the *fu* that is also the *xing*." Since the *fu* implies exact and minute descriptions faithful to the particulars of real life, poems that are usually classified as the *bi* or the *xing* may also contain an element of the *fu* to serve, as Bloomfield put it, as "the skin" or "the beingness" of a poetic work.[57] Description is an important element in lyric poetry, but there is no such thing as a purely descriptive poem. Liu Xizai said,"In the case that the *fu* is also the *bi* or the *xing*, an extra-textual significant import would be conveyed by means of an intra-textual fact. ... Otherwise, if one describes an object just for the object's sake, what is the use of description?"[58] Goethe said, "There is a poetry without figures of

speech which is itself a single figure of speech."[59] Friedman remarked, "Yet a poet may be bare of metaphors and still be very rich in symbolism."[60] What is a *fu* on one level of reading may be a *bi* or a *xing* on another. Many of Du Fu's poems are of this nature; and so are many poems of the Symbolists. Baudelaire's *Harmonie du Soir* which we have already discussed, might appear at first reading to be a simple description of a landscape. Mallarmé's sonnet "Ses purs ongles" could be taken as a pure descriptive poem but it is certainly not one. Many of Verlaine's poems are also good examples, which usually seem to be perfectly descriptive except for some slight indication that their true purpose is quite different. T.S.Eliot is a master of description. He is often seen to mix apparently descriptive lines with apparently symbolic ones and the result is that those descriptive lines are naturally tinged with symbolic overtones. In the terms of Chinese critics, many poems of the above-mentioned poets can be grouped in the category of "fu er xing," that is, the *fu* that is also the *xing*.[61]

Mei Yaochen (1002-1060) of the Song dynasty is recorded to have said,

> (A poet) must try to present a scene which is difficult to describe to the effect that it seems to be right before one's eyes and that it suggests an infinite meaning beyond words. Only then can he claim that he has written the superlative poetry.[62]

To present, or rather to represent, a scene which appears to be right before one's eyes is the function and the feature of the *fu*. Yet whenever and wherever a double or an infinite meaning is involved, the poem has crossed the boundary of the *fu* and entered the domains of the *bi* and the *xing*, as Wu Qiao said, "In the *fu*, meaning is contained within words, and can be sought by tracing the words; whereas in the *bi* and the *xing*, meaning resides beyond words and cannot be sought on the basis of mere words."[63]

It was Liu Xie who first tried to distinguish the *bi* and the *xing* from an aesthetic point of view. According to Liu, the *bi* means to "describe things in order to carry over an idea" and "to use plain language in order to intimate a situation."[64] The idea intended is not stated directly but attached to the description of things. In

this sense, the *bi* is more obscure and oblique than the *fu*. On the other hand, the language used in the *bi* is relatively plain. Compared with the *xing*, the *bi* is less obscure and oblique. Liu Xie asserted, "bi xian er xing yin," that is, "the *bi* is obvious and the *xing* is obscure." In the chapter of "Yin xiu," he further elaborated what he meant by *yin* or the "hidden," "obscure," and "implicit."

> The *yin* as a style suggests meaning beyond the text. In the *yin*, there are mysterious overtones to be apprehended indirectly, as well as hidden beauty to show unobstrusively.[65]

In the *xing*, there is an unintended, unexpected and concealed beauty which, as Liu Xie put it, like pearls or jade in the depth of water, only manifests itself through beautiful ripples it causes. In the summary to the same chapter, he wrote,

> In profound writings resides hidden beauty,
> And enduring flavour wrapped in obliquity.
> (Literary) discourses arise through the arrangement of words,
> Just as the hexagram changes with the realignment of its lines.[66]

In the *Book of Changes* the realignment of the lines of a hexagram gives rise to various images. Literary writings are made up of words - words charged with meaning. By manipulating the words, infinite meanings would be suggested. Thus Liu's idea of the aesthetic tendency of the *xing* may be summarized in one word - "yin." His views were echoed by Chen Qiyuan of the Qing dynasty who wrote,

> Although both the *bi* and *xing* involve the figurative way of writing, the *xing* is obscure and the *bi* obvious; the *xing* has a wide connotation and the *bi* has a narrow one.[67]

"Narrow," because in the *bi*, there is a fixed correspondence between the shape and the meaning. "Wide," because in the *xing*, the meaning is indeterminate. Chen himself explained the distinctions as follows:

> A poem of the *xing* is a result of poetic impulse. In the *xing*, the relationship between the word and its referent is one of neither-attached-nor-detached type. The words are here, yet the meanings are there; the words may be little, yet the significances are far-reaching. In the *bi*, there exists a one-to-one correspondence between the two sides of comparison. The words are determinate and the intentions clear.[68]

In the *bi*, the hidden meaning corresponds rigidly to the surface meaning. In the *xing*, the "little words" have to carry a big load of "great significance," which is indefinite and unfathomable. This distinction brings us to a similar contrast between allegory and symbolism in Western tradition.

In allegory, as in the *bi*, there is a fixed meaning behind the surface meaning. The reader is allowed or encouraged to see through the text to the underlying significance. In symbolism, as in the *xing*, the meaning is elusive, inexhaustible and cannot be translated into other terms as it is a part and parcel of the reality itself. Goethe defined what he called the "true symbol" by contrast with allegory as "the representation of the general through the particular, not, however, as a dream or shadow, but as the revelation of the unfathomable in a moment filled with life."[69] Allegory is like dream amd shadow, whereas symbolism, as Coleridge put it, "always partakes of the reality which it renders intelligible." Like the living reality - life itself, symbolism is unfathomable. William Blake expressed a similar view. He said, "Vision or imagination is a representation of what actually exists, really or unchangeably. Fable or Allegory is formed by the daughter of Memory." Yeats explained that by "vision or imagination" Blake meant symbolism.[70] In Hegel, it was "concrete intuition and the heartfelt depth of imagination" that appeared to be a synonym of symbolism, which he highly praised. Meanwhile, he described allegory as "frosty" "cold" and "bleak."[71] Vischer saw in allegory "the complete dissolution of the original relation between idea and image, an index either of artistic decay or artistic immaturity, inorganic in character and ... enveloped in mysteriousness (*Geheimnissthuerei*), but lacking the depth of mystery (*Geheimniss*)."[72] His castigation of allegory reached a new peak. Yeats certainly belonged to the same camp. He showed sympathy to the assertion that "symbolism said things which could not be said so perfectly in any other way, ... while allegory said things which could be said as well, or better, in another way," and remarked that Michelangelo's symbolism "has helped to awaken the modern imagination;" while Tintoretto's allegory is "but a moment's amusement for our fancy."[73] In this

century, Wilbur Urban maintained that the artistic symbol is not "merely a surrogate for a concept," by which he certainly alluded to allegory, but is rather the way in which the ideal content is apprehended and expressed.[74] Auden also stressed the indefiniteness of the symbol, saying "A symbolic correspondence is never one to one but always multiple, and different persons perceive different meanings."[75] Langbaum, comparing medieval allegorical and modern symbolist poems, observed that "In the allegorical poetry of the Middle Age and Renaissance, the symbol stands in a one-to-one relation for an external idea or system of ideas. But the modern symbol exists as an object for imaginative penetration." Citing Dante and Eliot, he remarked that Dante's symbols point to definite ideas; whereas Eliot's "put forth an atmosphere of unlimited meaningfulness."[76]

In his survey of the linguistic history of "symbol" and "allegory," Gadamer describes the contrast between these two terms as "what is inwardly and essentially significant" and the externally and artistically significant, claiming that this "difference of meaning" led to "a contrast of values."[77] He has revealed that symbol and allegory, like the *bi* and the *xing*, are also two value concepts.

> The symbol, as what can be interpreted inexhaustibly, because it is indefinite, is opposed to allegory, understood as standing in a more exact relation to meaning and exhausted by it, as art is opposed to non-art.[78]

This is a good summary of the modern tradition in "aesthetic consciousness" which started with Kant,[79] Goethe, Schiller, Schelling and other German thinkers at the end of the eighteenth century.

It should be noted here that there has been in recent years a counter-current against this tradition which favours symbol at the expense of allegory. Critics such as Walter Benjamin and Paul de Man have tried to reverse the verdict and put the value of allegory above that of symbol. And there has also been a third tendency to try to compromise these two conflicting views and take "symbolic" as a term that contains and does not negate "allegory" as a perfectly legitimate poetic device.[80] It

is not my intention to be involved in this debate; for my sole purpose is to trace the Chinese tradition of the literary symbolic through a parallel study with comparable Western traditions.

Although the *bi* and the *xing* each has its own specific features, we need to be aware that the difference between them, to a large extent, is a difference of degree. There should be no clear-cut distinctions. Those who have tried to force a division between the two by certain rigid criteria are more or less guilty of being prescriptive. As has been said, Kong Yingda spoke of the difference between the *bi* and the *xing* as a difference of degree rather than essence.[81] His view is not unique. Northrop Frye, for example, described this difference of degree as "a kind of sliding scale, ranging from the most explicitly allegorical, consistent with being literature at all, at one extreme, to the more elusive, anti-explicit and anti-allegorical at the other." To allegorical writings of diverse degrees of obscurity, he gave the names of "continuous allegory," "free-style allegory," Milton's allegory, Shakespeare's allegory and the allegory of the modern type, where "poetic imagery begins to recede from example and precept and become increasingly ironic and paradoxical."[82] He also mentioned a variety of literary phenomena which he called "naive allegory." According to Frye, naive allegory, based on mixed metaphor, is simply "a discursive writing with an illustrative image or two stuck into it," and has no place "within the normal boundaries of literary expression."[83] Similarly and interestingly, long before Frye, Chen Tingchuo identified a kind of poetry which came very close to Frye's notion of naive allegory. Chen argued that, although in such a poem, "every word seems to imply a comparison, it cannot be counted as a poem of the *bi* at all; for it is too shallow and does not conform to the principles of 'the ancient poets'." His examples turned out to be just like those Frye labelled as naive allegory: they are written "under the excitement of a particular occasion" for a practical purpose, marred by mixed metaphors, and will "vanish with the occasion." He then gave more examples of the true *bi* and commented, "These can be said to have mastered the essential ideas of the *bi* as they are profound, mild and

oblique and their ideas are conveyed neither intentionally nor completely unintentionally." But this is not *xing* yet; the *xing* is even more demanding:

> If the intentions of a poem are not deeply concealed and the thoughts are not condensed, this is not *xing*. Where the intentions are deeply concealed and the thoughts are condensed, but the metaphor may point to a specific tenor and the thoughts are attached to (a thing) by force, this still does not come up to the standard of the *xing*. What we call *xing* should be like this: Ideas precede the writing-brush; spirit overflows words. It is extremely elusive and dynamic, extremely profound and intensive. It appears remote, yet it is not far off. It can be explained but is quite inexplicable. It comes and goes, lingering on and on. And all conforms to the sincere and the unfathomable.[84]

This is an adequate and accurate description of the aesthetic hallmarks of the *xing*. In the mode of the *xing*, a poet finds his material in sensations. He takes up a writing-brush not because he knows exactly what he is going to say. He may begin with an idea, yet his meaning changes and grows richer with each progress that he makes and each obstacle that he overcomes. A poem composed in this mode tends to suggest much more than its verbal signs can possibly contain and its spirit, as it were, would spill over its linguistic structure. Such a poem is "extremely elusive and dynamic," for it has not a definite reference. It certainly has a meaning or meanings. But they are indeterminate and cannot be explained away. It is "extremely profound and intensive," for it has the potential to suggest infinite and inexhaustible meanings. And the relationship between its verbal structure and its possible meaning should be neither too explicit nor too fixed, for implications of this sort are best felt rather than explained.

Thus on the level of aesthetic tendencies, again we have seen that the contrast between the *bi* and the *xing* is surprisingly similar to that between allegory and symbolism and that the way in which Chinese theorists describe the aesthetic characteristics of the *fu*, *bi* and *xing* resembles very much that of the Western theorists in describing the direct statement, allegory and symbolism. In fact, the expressions they have employed are sometimes so similar that one would be tempted to think that it is possible to use the one to translate the other.

In exploring the theory of symbolism, one can never go very far without involving the issue of interpretation. Paul Ricoeur argued that symbols "have the ability to engender a conceptual diversity," by which he meant "an unlimited number of potential interpretations at a conceptual level."[85] His view was shared by Tzvetan Todorov, who claimed that "the inseparability of symbolism and interpretation" are "simply two aspects (production and reception) of a single phenomenon."[86] The *bi* and the *xing*, like allegory and symbolism, are established by interpretation, or simply the interpretative process itself. Therefore, we need to go on with the comparative study of the *fu*, *bi* and *xing* on the level of interpretation.

6.4 As Modes of Interpretation

Jonathan Culler has asserted that "poetics is essentially a theory of reading."[87] The Chinese theory of the *fu*, *bi* and *xing* began with the interpretation of the *Shi jing*. In the *Mao zhuan*, wherever Master Mao makes the remark, "Xing ye," he is indicating that the poem should be read in the mode of the *xing*. When Wang Yi argued that, "The writing of the *Li sao* takes the *xing* after the *Shi*," he was invoking an established literary norm to justify his reading of the *Li sao*. Zhu Xi derived his definition of the *fu*, *bi* and *xing* from his reading of the poems of the *Shi jing* and his occasional inconsistency in describing these concepts betrays his difficulty in interpreting those poems. Therefore the theory of the *fu*, *bi* and *xing* is first and foremost a theory of reading.

A poem is capable of being read in many diverse ways and may lead to many diverse interpretations; yet in Chinese poetics, these ways and interpretations may invariably be stratified into three different levels in accordance with its use of language and with the nature of its relation to its referent.

The primary level is the mode of the *fu*. According to the definitions given by critics of various generations, one of the characteristics of the *fu* is its directness of expression. Viewed from the perspective of the *fu* as a mode of reading, the directness here means that the language of a poem is regarded as literal and its words have a direct relation to their referents. By "literal," we mean that the linguistic structure is understood in its standard word meaning as opposed to its tropic, figurative or ironical meaning. Kong Yingda pointed out, "Poems of the *Shi* which state events straightforwardly without recourse to figures are all considered as the *fu*."[88]

"Guan ju," the first poem of the *Shi jing*, has generally been interpreted as a love poem since the beginning of this century and this interpretation has been acclaimed as an achievement after the "rubbish" of the Han scholarship was cleared away. However this interpretation is not necessarily the only correct reading of the poem. Generally speaking, an interpretation is always pointed in two directions simultaneously: toward a text to be interpreted and for an audience in need of the interpretation. Modern readers at the beginning of the century, being pushed by a momentous anti-traditional trend of repudiating the long-established Confucian ethical codes and calling for "free marriage choice based upon love," naturally favoured a more or less literal reading of the poem. On the other hand the Han scholars faced an audience composed of officials and would-be officials whose job it was to learn the *Shi jing* and apply it to the administration of a government and to giving advice to their superiors and rulers. It is not right to accuse them of being blind to the fact that the "Guan ju" is a love poem. They just ignored its literal meaning for an allegorical one. As masters of classics, they had the duty to provide commentary to the text and, as Frye has said, "all commentary is allegorical interpretation, an attaching of ideas to the structure of poetic imagery."[89] What we have seen in Mao's annotation of and Zheng's commentary on the *Shi jing* is precisely such an "attaching of ideas to the structure of poetic imagery." Confronted with a grave situation in which empresses and their clansmen frequently dominated

Han politics and threatened the orthodox status of the Liu family,[90] Confucian scholars remonstrated against their illegitimate involvement in politics by holding up King Wen's wife as a good example through the interpretation of the "Guan ju" and a number of other *Shi jing* poems. This interpretation that attempts to read the significance of a poem in terms of its original or assumed original significance can be called historical allegorical interpretation. It corresponds to the mode of the *bi* in Chinese poetics. Morton Bloomfield asserted that historical allegorical interpretation "is essentially modern and was first developed in the Renaissance and flowered in the last two centuries."[91] This may be true in the West; but in China it seems that this kind of interpretation was developed at a very early stage. Mencius (c. 372-289 B.C.) said that in reading a poem one should try to "meet the (poet's) intention through the (surface) meaning."[92] In the *bi* as a mode of interpretation, the text is treated as a transparent medium, a mere vehicle for conveying the experience of the author to the reader. The verbal structure of a poem is regarded as a system of signs pointing to or representing a reality that exists parallel to the linguistic structure. This kind of interpretation is basically non-linguistic business and demands historical knowledge. It presupposes that meaning precedes language and invariably leads to one-to-one, sentence-by-sentence search for referents. Su Dongpu's famous lyric "Bu Suan Zi":

> Half moon hangs on sparse *wu-tung* tree;
> The water clock stops, people settle down.
> Who sees the recluse passing by, all alone:
> A haunting shadow of a fugitive swan.
>
> Then, suddenly startled, it turns its head,
> With a grief that no one can know.
> Looking over each wintry bough, it settles on none:
> The lonely sandbank's cold.[93]

was interpreted by a critic as follows:

> "half moon" suggests political dimness; "water clock stops" indicates the dark time; "recluse," refers to frustrated gentlemen with lofty ideas; "haunting" suggests helplessness; "startled swan" stands for a troubled virtuous man; "turns its head" implies that his love for the ruler cannot be forgotten; "no one can know," suggests that the ruler fails to understand him; "looking over each wintry bough, it settles on none," suggests that he cannot feel at ease in a high position.[94]

This kind of interpretation, which disregards the poetic work as an organic whole, isolates the individual words or sentences and forces them to stand for or represent individual objects or events in the real world, is an extreme example of the mode of the *bi*. Apparently the significance reached through such an interpretation is narrow and particular. But to be particular must mean particulars of something. A historical allegorical interpretation is thus often related to a broader or more general significance. In *Mao-zhuan*'s interpretation of the "Guan ju," after the poem is referred to the sacred King Wen and his virtuous queen, Master Mao goes on to state:

> Then the force of civilization will prevail throughout the world. When husband and wife observe the separation of the sexes, father and son will love each other. When father and son love each other, ruler and minister will respect each other. When ruler and minister respect each other, the court will remain straight. When the court is straight, the kingly influence will prevail.[95]

A general significance is thus drawn from a particular case. This interpretation has often been dismissed as far-fetched and even absurd by modern critics. But from the point of view of Han scholars, the inference from the cooing birds to human sexual relationship, and then to the model couple, and finally, to the success of a kingly way in running a country, follows strictly an established philosophical principle expounded in the *Book of Changes*.

> After there are heaven and earth, there are the individual things.
> After the individual things have come into being, there are two sexes.
> After there are male and female, there is the relationship between husband and wife.
> After the relationship between husband and wife exists, there is the relationship between father and son.
> After the relationship between father and son exists, there is the relationship between prince and servitor.
> After the relationship between prince and servitor exists, there is the difference between superior and inferior.
> After the difference between the superior and inferior exists, the rules of propriety and right can operate.[96]

This principle is supposed to be generally true. The significance revealed through *Mao zhuan*'s interpretation or allegorization is here no longer seen as a particular

case. This kind of ahistorical allegorical interpretation is the mode of the *xing*. Compared with the mode of the *bi*, while it also attempts to make the poem relevant to the contemporary ethical and political reality, it is interested in the universal significance. There is no emphasis on the one-to-one correspondence between poetic images and individual objects or events in the external world.

In this view of the matter, the *bi* and the *xing* may be taken as two connected phases in one interpretative process. Zhu Xi said, "the significance of the *bi*, though apt, is shallow; whereas the significance of the *xing*, though broad, is far-reaching."[97] He saw the distinction between the *xing* and the *bi* largely as a difference between a broader and a narrow meaning. Yan Can, explaining his commentary on the *Shi jing*, said, "Wherever we speak of the *xing*, the *bi* is implied; where it is not, a special note will be made."[98] He saw that *bi* and *xing* are usually included in the same process. For this reason, *bi* and *xing* are often seen in one compound word "bixing," which in most cases is synonymous with term "jituo" or something used as a surrogate for something else - a Chinese way of referring to allegorical interpretation.

It has become clear that what the *Mao zhuan* means by *xing* in the context of a mode of reading can also be understood as a kind of allegorical interpretation; only it aims at an allegorization of, as Zhu Xi put it, a broader and more remote significance than the *bi* does. Yet in Chinese poetics there is another type of *xing* which possesses quite a different nature. To examine the meaning of the *xing* of this nature, we need to go back to Confucius's conversation with Zi Xia:

> Zi Xia asked: "what is the meaning of the lines:
> What lovely, artful smiling!
> What clear and beautiful eyes!
> Plain ground for coloured patterns.'
> The master said, "The business of painting follows (the preparations of) the plain ground." Zi Xia asked, "Ritual comes afterwards?" The Master said, "It is Shang (i.e. Zi Xia) who inspires me. From now on I can talk with him about the *Shi*."

Those three lines from a poem in the *Shi jing* (no.57, now only the first two lines are extant), if understood literally, are apparently a description of a woman's

beauty. Confucius reads them as an implicit comparison to "the business of painting." Zi Xia broadens their significance and arrives at a more general meaning that ritual comes after material foundation is laid. His reading conforms to Confucius's proposition that "the *Shi* enables one to be inspired (*xing* in the original)," and wins Confucius's approval. This kind of reading deprives the poem of the referential and circumstantial functions and attempts to treat any brief descriptive lyric as a moment of epiphany. This is the mode of the *xing*.

It seems that this tradition was interrupted in the Han dynasty as a result of Han scholars' over-emphasis on the metaphorical function of the *xing* at the expense of its evocative function. During the Song dynasty, however, there was a distinct revival. Zhu Xi, for example, claimed that to read a poem, one should "submerge and swim about" [*han yong* 涵泳] in the poem so that after considerable time, one will effortlessly find it perfectly perspicuous and harmonious." He held that, to understand a poem, "there is no need to invoke many words and principles outside the text, which will only congest the lively ideas of the poet." And he made it clear that "this is the *xing* which constitutes one of the Six Principles and which means to arouse and to evoke."[99] He urged the reader of the *Shi jing* to focus his attention on the text of the poem itself rather than on any extra-textual facts and principles.

Wang Fuzhi, discussing Confucius's statement "*Shi* ke yi xing" or "the *Shi* enables one to be inspired," said:

> What is meant by "ke yi"? It means that (the *Shi*) can apply to whatever occasion one comes across. ... The writer may have one specific thought or intention (in writing a poem), each individual reader, however, may attain whatever appeals to his temperament. ... The movement of human emotion knows no bound. Each reader acquires what happens to touch his feelings. This is exactly why poetry is so much treasured.[100]

While Wang has not excluded the existence of the author's intention, he also claims that the reader does not have to take the author's intention as the purpose of his reading. Not only are different readers allowed to have different readings of the same poem, but the same reader may reach different conclusions about the same

poem, because he may have different emotions at a different time. Thus Wang has completely departed from the positivistic tendency in the Chinese tradition of interpretation, which looks outside the text for information about the author's intention. For Wang, interpretation has become a matter of reaching significance through the interaction between the text and the reader. His idea was later put into a laconic statement by Tan Xian of the Late Qing dynasty.

> The author may not necessarily have the meaning; why should the reader necessarily not have the meaning.[101]

To sum up, in the Chinese tradition of interpretation, there are three different modes in reading a literary work - the *fu*, *bi* and *xing*. The *fu* can be described as literal reading, in which the reader tries to find the significance in what a given text says. He will not concern himself with extra-textual factors, neither the author's intention, nor the situation in which the work is written, nor his own feelings and purpose in reading the work. In both the *bi* and the *xing*, the reader tries to reach the significance of what the work suggests. He attempts to link the text in question with a reality outside the text. In this case, both the *bi* and the *xing* are allegorical. While in the *bi*, the task consists in a one-to-one, sentence by sentence search for referents, in the *xing*, a broader and more general significance is sought after. In this sense, the *bi* may be called "historical allegorical interpretation" and the *xing*, "ahistorical allegorical interpretation."[102]

In Chinese poetics, the purpose of both above-discussed modes of interpretation is to locate the "jituo," or the allegory, of the poet, which is supposed to be hidden behind the text. In these modes of interpretation, the reader focuses his interest on the author's life experience and the time when the work is made. The reader's own life experience is not involved.

Yet there is another kind of *xing* which is also a mode of interpretation. In this type of *xing*, the reader cuts off the link between the text and its author and does not bother himself with the author's intention. Instead he concentrates on the text, works hard to "submerge and swim about" in the text, linking it with the part

of his life experience most affected, and allows himself to be borne along upon the stream of melody, enraptured by the ceaseless pleasure produced by stimulating imagery. The significance reached in this fashion is detachable from the author's intention, but detachable from the verbal structure of the work and is closely linked with the reader's own life experience. Thus a more acceptable description of the interpretative process would be: the reader, confronted by a literary text, will "function himself, to gain access to the magic of the signifier, to the pleasure of writing."[103] This type of the *xing* may be called symbolic interpretation. In such an interpretation, the literary work is looked on as a symbol, which possesses potential generative power and which is capable of inducing infinite and indefinite significance.

However, these three modes of interpretation are not necessarily separable; and indeed, it is, in most cases, impossible and undesirable to separate them. A good poem can always be approached in different ways. Let us consider the following quatrain:

> Last night in the nuptial chamber red candles were lit.
> Waiting for dawn in the hall to pay respects to Parents-in-law.
> Making-up done, asks Groom softly:
> "Eye-brows drawn, dark or light, in the fashion?"[104]

The title is "Gui yi xian Zhang Shuibu," or "In the Style of Boudoir: Presented to Zhang, Minister of the Waterways Department." This pretty little poem can be read in all the above-mentioned three modes. If it is read in the mode of the *fu*, it is, as the title has clearly shown, a "boudoir poem," presenting a bride preparing for the expected audience with the patriarchs of her new home. On this level, it is a descriptive poem, nonetheless a good one as far as it is exquisitely composed. But an alternative title of the poem, which reads "Presented to Zhang, Minister of the Waterways Department Upon Taking Imperial Examination," as well as our knowledge of the Tang custom, would encourage us to read it as an allegory. The poet likens himself to the bride in the poem, Zhang the Minister to the groom, the would-be examiner of the coming imperial examination to the parents-in-law. Apart

from these comparisons, there is yet another over-all analogy between a woman getting married and a scholar taking an examination. Thus the allegorical significance of the poem becomes very clear: the poet, by presenting his own compositions to a prestigious official, a literary patron, wishes to know if his writings will suit the taste of his future examiner so that he will come out successfully. This is the mode of the *bi*. Then, if we read this poem by linking it to our own life experience, we will perhaps reach a more general significance, a sort of "great commonplace," such as that when we are expecting an event which is of crucial importance to us, no matter how well-prepared we are, we would feel uncertain about the unknown future and would like to be assured and reassured in case there might be something amiss.

Like China, the West has a long tradition of stratifying different levels of interpretation. The Western tradition of interpretation of multi-level meaning began with biblical studies. According to Basil Willey, the name of Philo Judaeus (c. 20 B.C. to C. A.D. 45) is usually associated with the early use of the allegorical method in biblical studies.[105] After him, St Augustine (354-430) preached that the Old Testament should be "interpreted in a fourfold way, namely, according to history, to aetiology, to analogy, and to allegory."[106] By the sixth century, St Gregory I the Great (ca. AD 540-604) in the letter prefaced to his commentary on *Job* likened biblical interpretation to building a house: the literal-historical sense lays the foundation, the allegorical sense erects the walls in a structure of doctrine, and the moral interpretation spreads the beauty of colour over the structure.[107] In England, John of Salisbury (1110-1180) also recognized the necessity for interpreting the Scriptures in the fourfold sense. They were historical, allegorical, tropological and anagogical.[108]

Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) in his *Summa Theologiae* speaks of the twofold meaning: historical or literal meaning and spiritual meaning. He then further classifies the spiritual meaning into allegorical, moral and anagogical meaning.[109] His way of finding a fourfold meaning in biblical passage was adopted

later by Dante Alighieri (1265-1321) who, in the *Letter to Can Grande della Scala*, speaks of his *Divine Comedy* as having many meanings which fall on two levels: meaning obtained through the letter and meaning obtained through the things signified by the letter. The first is called literal meaning. The second is further subdivided into three levels: allegorical, moral and anagogical. All these are, of course, St Thomas's ideas. However, Dante elaborates these ideas by interpreting psalm no.114 of the Old Testament as an illustration:

> "When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language, Judah was his sanctuary and Israel his dominion." For if we look to the letter alone, the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt in the time of Moses is indicated to us; if to the allegory, our redemption accomplished by Christ is indicated to us; if to the moral sense, the conversion of the soul from the woe and misery of sin to a state of grace is indicated to us; if to the anagogical sense, the departure of the consecrated soul from the slavery of this corruption to the liberty of eternal glory is indicated.[110]

Here the literal meaning corresponds to the *fu*. The allegorical meaning is based on an analogy between Isaac, whose another name is Israel and one of whose sons is Jacob, and Jesus Christ: like Christ who offered his life to God the Father for mankind, Isaac was prepared to die out of obedience to his father, Abraham; and like Christ who rose from His tomb and returned to His Father in heaven, Isaac, by divine intervention, was returned to his father, Abraham. This is obviously a historical allegorical interpretation and corresponds to the mode of *bi*. The moral sense is also based on an analogy between the fact that Israel went out of Egypt to the Promised Land and "the conversion of the soul," but it aims at a more universal significance and is therefore an ahistorical allegorical interpretation, corresponding approximately to the *xing* of the first type. The last interpretation which finds in the text an anagogical meaning has a strong link with Dante's own life experience if we recognize that this is also a central meaning that he intends to reveal in his *Divine Comedy*. This last reading corresponds to the second type of the *xing*.

However this tradition of reading a work on several levels of meaning, according to Frodsham, died out in Europe during the seventeenth century. As a

result, "Western sinologists have very much inclined to ignore the part played by *bi* and *xing* in Chinese verse." Frodsham also claimed that this tradition "has only recently revived." He offered the examples of I.A.Richards's "multiple definition," Keneth Burke's "multiple causation," and William Troy's attempt to revive the medieval "four levels of meaning," suggesting that they are all "relevant to any attempt to read Chinese literature in depth."[111] We need a brief survey of the recent achievements in this area in Western literary criticism.

Erwin Panofsky discriminated between three layers of contents in a painting. He termed the first two respectively as "iconography" and "iconology." They are both "objective" interpretations in the sense that at these levels, one is discussing thematic and objective contents of the artistic work. "Iconography" refers to the fundamental materials of representation and "iconology" the motifs of the work. In other words, on the first and basic level, the interest is on the things for which the signs of an artistic work stand. On the second and higher level, the process of interpretation aims at finding the significance through the things signified. On the third and the highest level, Panofsky refers to the artistic work itself, its "intrinsic content," its unique "personal" elements that move a viewer most deeply and its symbolic values which can and should be found in the work.[112]

Tzvetan Todorov in his *Symbolism and Interpretation* discusses "the hierarchy of meanings." He identifies three diverse discourses and calls them respectively "literal discourse," "ambiguous discourse" and "transparent discourse." By "literal discourse," he means "discourse that signifies without evoking anything." Since even the most literal utterance inevitably evokes a group of other meanings, he claims that the so-called "literal discourses" are not literal texts, but literal readings. In his "ambiguous discourse," "several meanings of the same utterance are to be taken on exactly the same level." Obviously, this also refers to a kind of reading rather than a kind of text. "Transparent discourse" arises "when we perceives it we pay no attention to its literal meaning." And Todorov here makes a special note, "since the romantic era the term 'allegory' has sometimes been used to

designate this type of utterance."[113] Although it is identified as a kind of discourse, we have every reason to understand it also as a type of reading. Thus, Todorov's three discourses are entirely comparable to the *fu*, *bi* and *xing* in Chinese poetics. Todorov makes it clear that these three are "extreme and relatively clear cases," and "numerous intermediate cases" can be found in between.[114] As we have already shown, distinctions between the *fu*, *bi* and *xing* are not at all clear-cut, and there are also numerous intermediate cases which Chinese critics have called "fu er xing," ie. "the fu that is also the xing" or "bi er xing," ie. "the bi that is also the xing," etc..

The Italian theorist Emilio Betti described interpretation as "a triadic process."[115] In an early book, Betti made a distinction between cognitive, normative and reproductive interpretation.[116] However this distinction, according to Gadamer, "has no fundamental validity." Gadamer argued that these three are not really separable. They interpenetrate and interfuse each other and "constitute the one phenomenon," that is, the one single process of interpretation.[117] He himself preferred those three traditional terms: "subtilitas intelligendi (understanding)," "subtilitas explicandi (interpretation)" and "subtilitas applicandi (application)," and described them as three steps of "one unified process."[118] Hans Robert Jauss remarked, "This unity has determined, in a manner more or less one-sidedly realized, all textual interpretation from time immemorial; ..."[119] As we have shown earlier, *Mao zhuan*'s interpretation of the first poem of the *Shi jing* is carried out in three steps. The first indicates the word-meaning or the literal meaning; the second explains the meaning of the things represented, involving an analogy between the osprey and the queen; and the third aims at a universal meaning and is also an application of the poem. The first is the *fu*; the second, the *bi*; and the third, the *xing*. They constitute a triadic unity of interpretative process.

7. Conclusions

"What is the *xing*?" like "what is symbolism?" is one of those questions in literary studies that can only be discussed, never finally answered. For this reason, we have avoided attempting a crisp, conclusive definition of the *xing*. Instead, we have dealt with it through analytical description of its versatile uses in Chinese history of literary criticism, by looking into the numerous elements which enter into the issue and exploring the possible relations between these elements, and especially, by comparing it with Western theories of symbolism. Through knowing others, we expect to know ourselves better. The primary task of this thesis set forth in the Introduction - "through the study of one tradition, to attain a better understanding of another and eventually to reach a mutual sympathetic understanding of both" - remains our first concern.

It needs to be reiterated here that the *xing* is by no means identical with the Western concept of symbolism or any other Western concept. Every literary term is unique in some sense. Even in one tradition, interpretations of a literary term often vary from one critic to another. Symbolism as held by Romanticists is certainly different in many ways from that by French Symbolists and Modernists; and the *xing* as understood by Liu Xie is not the same as that by his contemporary Zhong Rong, as we have tried to analyse and discriminate in preceding chapters. However, the basic issues of our present topic that have confronted critics, ancient and modern, Chinese and Western, are more or less the same. These issues include: what is the nature of poetry in terms of its purpose and function? what is the

relationship between the poet and the external world, between poetry and reality? what is the difference between poetic language and ordinary language? What makes a poem poetic? what is "the most poetic" poetry? and what is the relationship between the reader and the poetic text? To these questions, Chinese and Western critics have given their own answers and drawn their own conclusions. Their answers and conclusions, in spite of many differences, also have a great deal in common. These common points are what we need to pay special attention to, for what matters most is not the subtle differences of expression between critics of two traditions but their common submission to implacable rules.

And these common points are by no means superficial, but profound. The *xing* and the symbol have both been described as the uniter of the opposites. Coleridge said, "All symbols of necessity involve an apparent contradiction."[1] The two sides of the contradiction have been explained in various ways. It is my argument that the *xing* and the symbol can both be taken as the uniter of what is presented and what is not presented, that is to say, a uniter of the presence and the absence, of speech and silence.

In a *xing* or a symbol, what is presented is something material and what is not presented but suggested is something immaterial. Hence the *xing* and the symbol have been described in various circumstances as the uniter of the *jing* and the *qing*, the material and immaterial, the concrete and the abstract, the substantial and the insubstantial, the visible and the invisible, the sensible and the conceptual, the sensuous and the spiritual, and the real and the ideal.

In a *xing* or a symbol, what is presented is, as a rule, something in the external world and what is not presented but evoked is something in the internal world of the human being. Hence the *xing* and the symbol have been described as the uniter of the exterior and the interior, the existence and meaning, the objective and the subjective, the corporeal and the incorporeal, and the body and the soul.

In a *xing* or a symbol, what is presented is usually near, small or insignificant, and familiar and what is not presented but evoked is usually far-

reaching, great or significant, and hitherto unknown. Hence the *xing* and the symbol have been described as the uniter of the low and the high, the Here and the There, thisness and otherness, the small and the great, the insignificant and the significant, the below and the above, and the known and the unknown.

In a *xing* or a symbol, what is presented is, by definition, a part of what is not presented but suggested. Hence the *xing* and the symbol have been described as the uniter of the particular and the universal, the finite and the infinite, the transitory and the eternal. Carlyle provided us with a comprehensive and most profound description of the dialectical essence of the symbolic expression.[2]

In a word, as Goethe put it, the symbol is "the thing without being the thing, and yet it is the thing: an image caught in a spiritual mirror and yet identical to the object."[3] And so is the *xing*. The *xing*, like the *xiangwan* as proposed by Zhuang Zi, is a net of image, a combination of strings and holes, of the substantial and the insubstantial, fullness and emptiness; a combination of being and non-being, which is employed to catch the black pearl - the mysterious and ineffable Tao.[4] The *xing* and, indeed, the symbol as well, in their highest sense, are the revelation or the embodiment of the Tao.

7.1 *Xing*, Symbol and Evocation

It is, however, not the mere use of one thing to stand for or represent another that makes a *xing*; for that will put the *xing* on the equal footing with the *bi* or *fu*. A *xing* is like a *bi* or a trope in that a simile, metaphor, allegory and so on, each represents a mode of speaking in which what is said means something more or something else. But a *xing* is not a *bi*, just as a symbol is not a trope. It may be distinguished in terms of how it relates image and idea in a poem. In the *bi*, what is said is distinct from what is meant, and their relationship is based upon a stated or implied resemblance within difference. In a *xing*, as in a symbol, what is said is understood as what is meant, but, at the same time, is made to infer, by virtue of

the associations provoked by what is said and the manner in which it is said. The relationship between what is said and what is to be inferred is not necessarily based on resemblance, for many images have become potentially symbolic not through likeness but chiefly through one sort of association or another. In such circumstances, a *xing* is synecdochic or indexical rather than metaphorical.[5] Then the relationship between what is said and what is meant is not stated, not referred to or implied, but suggested or evoked. At the very beginning of the *Mao zhuan*, the *xing* is interpreted as "to evoke."[6] Liu Xie, Li Zhongmeng and other critics have defined the *xing* as "to evoke emotions."[7] Huang Zhongxi of the Qing dynasty claimed that "whenever and wherever natural scenes or objects evoke human feelings and that is used to express this, we have the *xing*."[8]

In the West, the use of the words "suggest" and "evoke" to denote a quality of the symbol or symbolism seems to have appeared rather late. But one must be aware that in Goethe, Coleridge, Carlyle and other critics, the word "reveal" is often seen and used with virtually the same effect as "suggest" and "evoke." Nevertheless it is Mallarmé who used these words consistently and emphatically to brand a new mode of writing. In him, poetry became an art of evocation - "to evoke an object little by little in order to show a state of mind."[9] He has since been echoed by many Modernist poets and critics. Yeats stressed that symbols "evoke an emotion which cannot be evoked by any other arrangement of colours and sounds and forms."[10] Pound observed that "the doctrine that one should 'suggest' not 'present'" was one of "the great gifts of Symbolism'."[11] Nicolson studied the symbolist art of Verlaine and came to the conclusion that the two characteristics of *Symbolisme* were "intimacy and suggestion."[12] Bowra pointed out that Mallarmé's theory, "put briefly, is that poetry should not inform but suggest and evoke."[13] Frye observed that Symbolists use the word as a symbol "to awaken other words to suggest or evoke something in the spiritual world."[14] In this sense, both the *xing* and symbolism can be called "the theory of evocative art."

There are several layers of meaning in this theory. First, an object, a scene or a situation should not be named and described, but should be evoked. Secondly, the relation of one image to another should not be stated or shown by means of conjunctions or relatives; hence, the use of juxtaposition, from which a specific meaning would emerge. Thirdly, the feeling and emotion the poet intends to convey should not be stated directly but should be intimated or evoked. Romantic poets are often seen to state their feelings directly and, as Carlyle put it, one would hear "a Shelley filling the earth with inarticulate wail, like the infinite, inarticulate grief and weeping of forsaken infants."[15] Fourthly, any thought or transcendental experience a poem may connote should be suggested or evoked rather than stated or told. "Beauty is truth; truth is beauty." A poem should itself be "a thing of beauty" rather than a talk about beauty. And therefore, fifthly, a poem is not in its essence a medium of communication. Whatever effect the poem may have on the reader, it works through suggestion and evocation.

All these, as we have demonstrated, are common in both the theory of the *xing* and symbolism. However, there is one point which distinguishes Mallarmé's theory of evocation from any other similar theories in China and in the West. For Mallarmé, to suggest or evoke does not simply mean to avoid naming things, e.g., to say "le septuor de scintillations" instead of the Great Bear. For Mallarmé, to evoke means, more importantly and more originally, to choose and arrange words in such a way that they will evoke their own meaning rather than the meaning of the author. Thus, to suggest or to evoke means that "the word does not echo the thing but other words, and hence the immediate impact *symbolisme* makes in the reader is that of incantation, a harmony of sounds and the sense of a growing richness of meaning unlimited by denotation."[16]

There is yet another implication in this theory of evocation. Gerhad Adler described true symbols as "irritants" to the conscious mind:

> Any true symbol is bound to contain an irrational (nonrational) element: an element that eludes conscious definition. In this way the symbol irritates the conscious mind into attempting to

> understand and formulate its meaning by a continuous process of circumambulation and approximation. Symbols have thus a peculiar fascination for and a dynamic effect on the conscious mind, "provoking" it to integrate them into consciousness. They provide a stimulus for contemplation by which more and more contents of the unconscious, condensed in symbolic images are forced into consciousness.[17]

Between the conscious and the unconscious, there is a great chasm which cannot be bridged except by the symbol. Through suggestion and evocation, or to use Adler's words, through "provoking" or "irritating," the symbol is able to force the unconscious into integration with consciousness, make it understandable and meaningful. In this sense, symbolism is the conscious expression of the unconscious. The *xing*, as we shall see, corresponds to the symbol on this point as well.

7.2 *Xing*, Symbol and the Unconscious

According to Chinese theorists, before understanding the actual writing, the poet has to score a victory over himself: the attainment of a moment of perfect emptiness of mind. Liu Xie observed, "vacancy and tranquillity are important in the development of literary thinking: the achievement of this state of vacancy and tranquillity entails the cleansing of the five viscera and the purification of the spirit."[18] This idea came directly from Zhuang Zi. Zhuang Zi had contended that in order that one's mind would become more receptive one had to forget his Self and suspend his sense-perception:

> Drop your form and body, reject your hearing and eyesight, forget your place in the hierarchy of things, then you may join in great unity with the infinite.
>
> Don't listen with the ear but listen with the mind, (better still) don't listen with the mind, but listen with the spirit [*ch'i*]. The ear stops at listening, the mind stops at matching (things with concepts), but the spirit is empty and receives all things.[19]

He called this process *xin zai* 心齋 or "the abstinence of the mind." Only by emptying one's mind, according to Zhuang Zi, is it possible to be one with the

Tao, for "the Tao only gathers where the emptiness is." Thus Zhuang Zi conceived sense-perception as the lowest form of cognition and rational, logical conception as a higher form. But the highest form of cognition was "to listen with the spirit," i.e., to rely on the intuition.

In reaching the state of "self-forgetting," a common practice is for the writer to fall asleep or to sink into a trance. Sima Xiangru, for example, while writing his great works, would enter into a trance and "became no longer conscious of the outside world," looking as if he had fallen asleep. Then he would suddenly arise (*xing* in the original) with vigour and freshness.[20] Wang Changling has claimed that all poetry arises from inactivity. When a poet lacks inspiration, he is advised to forget the Self (*wan Shen* 忘身) so as to allow imagination to work freely. According to him, the best way to free a burdened mind is to have a rest:

> If the mind is not rested, one will not feel at ease and there can be no inspiration (*xing* in the original). If there is no inspiration, one must go to sleep. A good sleep nourishes the mind.[21]

After such a nourishing sleep, "the river and the mountains come flooding into one's embrace, they join together and give inspiration."[22]

As has been discussed especially in 3.1, the word "xing" has the meaning similar to the Western concepts of intuitive and intermittent inspiration which has a lot to do with the unconscious. In fact, one of the meanings of the word "xing" is "to arise (to be born or to come into being) unawares."[23] The notion of "abstinence of the mind" as set forth by Zhuang Zi may well be understood as an effort "to transcend the self-conscious through anaesthesia on the sensuous level,"[24] so that intuition ("to listen with the spirit") rather than reason will be brought into full play. Wang Changling's proposition that one needs to go to sleep in order to attain the *xing* obviously can be explained as a way, like the use of drug or alcohol, of neutralizing the "Censor" of the conscious and setting the repressed unconscious free, so that when the conscious sleeps, the unconscious works.

In the West, the nineteenth century saw a renewed interest in the unconscious. Goethe, Schelling, Coleridge, Hegel, the early Romantics as a group, all referred to something "unconscious," although they did not necessarily use the term.[25] It is not surprising that they were the same people who took a great interest in the symbol and symbolism.

Carl Jung conceives the symbol as "a uniter of the opposites."[26] First of all, it is the uniter of the unconscious and the conscious. According to Freud, the unconscious is latent and not retrievable by any act of conscious will.[27] The unconscious is not a substantive, a thing; nor is it a place, an activity. It can only be described negatively: it is unseeable, unknowable, "undetected by soul," "not retrievable by any act of conscious will," and is not present but "absent from consciousness."[28] It is rather like the hole of a net, an existence of nothingness. Like the hole of a net which cannot exist by itself but always together with the strings, the unconscious cannot exist except in relation to the conscious. It is itself unknowable and can be known only indirectly through concrete images emerging from it. It is unseeable, its existence is inferred or diagnosed by occurrences in life which are not consciously motivated.[29] These "occurrences in life" include things, scenes, events, and situations. When they are presented in literary work, they become symbols to evoke the unseeable and unknowable. This brings us back to the basic meanings of the *xing*.

Because of the relation of the *xing* and the symbol to the unconscious, there arise several consequences concerning the aesthetic features of the *xing* and the symbol alike. First, since the unconscious is not retrievable by any act of conscious will, the symbol is as a rule spontaneously produced. It arises from the depth of the unconscious as "a darting fish leaps from a deep lake."[30] Thus, spontaneity is one of the hallmarks of the *xing* and the symbol. Secondly, since the unconscious lies beyond the grasp of reason, the symbol must be a product of intuition rather than logic and reason. As far as literary creation is concerned, the *xing*, as well as symbolism, is related to the unconscious genius, the sudden illumination or

epiphany. In Chinese, it is called "wu 悟 " or "dun wu 頓悟 ." Thirdly, since the unconscious itself is not seeable and not presentable, what can be seen and presented are its symptoms which become images in literary work. Because of this kind of oblique relationship, the things used as symbols may look irrelevant to the theme of the work. This irrelevance in literary work has been declared as "the great discovery of the French symbolists."[31] T.S.Eliot speaks of the sudden juxtaposition of "the apparent irrelevance and unrelatedness of things" in modern poetry.[32] Senior has observed that "one of the characteristic features of twentieth-century literature has been its preoccupation with irrelevance."[33] But the irrelevance is just "apparent." Through this apparent irrelevance a competent reader will see significance and discover that all things in the work are actually relevant. Therefore Senior suggests that this phenomenon should be called "significant irrelevance."[34] Aldrich speaks of the same thing as "the phenomenon of detachment-without-loss-of-intimacy"; while Marvick uses the phrase "at once aloof and involved."[35] In Chinese poetics, it has been an old doctrine that the relationship between the symbol and the meaning should not be too close, too fixed and too restrictive, but should be one that is "neither-attached-nor-detached" [*bu jie bu li* 不即不離] or "neither-separate-nor-adherent" [*bu tuo bu nian*, 不脫不黏].[36] Once again we have seen how amazingly similar Chinese and Western critics are in their description of the hallmarks of the symbol and symbolism.

7.3 *Xing*, Symbol and the Surplus of Meaning

Both the *xing* and the symbol have been described as ambiguous, obscure, and having meanings beyond words. The ambiguity, obscurity and the multiplicity of meaning have been explained in various ways, which in my view often complement, rather than contradict or exclude each other.

Kant has pointed out that no concept is able to express the total content of the symbol, for it is a "representation of the imagination which induces much thought, yet without the possibility of any definite thought whatever, i.e. concept, being adequate to it, and which language, consequently, can never get quite on level terms with or render completely intelligible."[37]

According to Hegel, in the symbol there is content, which is the meaning; and there is shape, which is used for the "signalization." A symbolic shape may have many other characteristics apart from the one it symbolizes once; and on the other hand, a concrete content "has in it many characteristics which other configurations containing the same characteristic may serve to express."[38] As a consequence, "the symbol by its very nature remains essentially ambiguous."[39] This is to say, a symbol may have the potential to evoke many different meanings and many symbols may serve to express one meaning. These two points, according to Hegel, cause the ambiguity of the symbol.

This ambiguity of the symbol has also been accounted for by the relation of the symbol to the unconscious. Jung claims that the symbol has "a wider 'unconscious' aspect that can never be precisely explained."[40] Therefore in his view, ambiguity and multiplicity of meaning is not only one of the characteristics of the symbol but also its prerequisite. He observes, "The symbol is alive only as long as it is pregnant with meaning. But once its meaning has been born out of it, once that expression is found which formulates the thing sought ... then the symbol is dead, and it becomes a conventional sign."[41] Thus the symbol is destined to be fluid, illusive, nebulous and to have infinite meanings.

Other theorists have traced the cause of the ambiguity of the symbol and symbolism to the nature of human thinking and feeling. According to Wang Fuzhi, the instability of the symbol derives from the instability of human emotion, which like a butterfly has no fixed perch or direction of movement.[42] Langer has similar views. She claims that "a true symbol always seems ... to be impoverished by the assignment of any one import, - that is to say, by the logical consummation of

meaning-relation."[43] The cause, she explains, lies in the "pervasive ambivalence which is characteristic of human feeling."[44] Heidegger contends that the ambiguity in expression is "never merely the remnant of a single meaning ... which has not yet been reached," but rather "the element in which the thinking must move in order to be rigourous."[45] Thus the conceiving of the symbolic form may perhaps be described as a process of approximating human feeling and thinking. Looking at the issue from a reader's point of view, one would find that the meaning of a symbolist poem is not in its theme or idea but is a process or an experience of the search for meaning.

The symbolist aesthetic in pursuing an indefinite and infinite meaning may be best characterized as an antithetical combination of the speech and silence, which, as Carlyle puts it, "act together to produce a double meaning." The symbol is an image of a thing, or a scene, or an event, the meaning of which remains unstated, leaving a blank for the reader to fill in. Mallarmé speaks of the poet as "musicienne du silence," of poetic effect caused by "les blancs," and of the silence of eternity in "le blanc du papier" into which the poem disappears or, rather, dissolves.[46] In this sense, symbolism means to express through absence. When the reader attempts to fill in the blanks, his assumption are to be based on the words of the poem. As the poet creates his world with words, the reader constructs his world with the same words provided by the poet, and the world the reader makes will be different from that of the poet or that made by any other reader. This is exactly what Wang Fuzhi means when he says that "the writer might have one single thought or intent, each individual reader, however, may attain whatever appeals to his own temperament."[47] Generally speaking this applies to the reading of any poetry alike; but in a symbolist poem, words are arranged in such a way that they energize each other to project meanings. Which of those meanings will be caught by the reader depends upon the reader's own sensibility and life experience, which vary from person to person; hence the multiplicity of the meaning of a poem.

In Chinese literary history, as we have seen, Liu Xie emphasizes the double signification of the *xing*.[48] Zhong Rong defines the *xing* as meaning beyond the text.[49] Sikong Tu claims that excellent poetry should have a flavour beyond its taste, and favours poetry with great intensity and impending significance, poetry that "without using a word, attains all the beauty."[50] Yan Yu contends that good poems should not be reduced to "a trammel of words" - a tool for communication, but should have the elusive beauty comparable to "sound in the air," "moon in the water," and should have "infinite meaning within finite words."[51]

This claim for surplus meaning beyond the text has been very consistently made in Chinese literary criticism. Density, intensity, obliquity, implicitness, economy in the use of words and the pursuit of inexhaustible meaning beyond the text have always been outstanding features of Chinese poetry. And it is on this point that Chinese poetics is perhaps closest to modern Western poetics.

7.4 *Xing*, Symbol and the Synecdochic

As has been said, the *xing* or the symbol is a uniter of the presence and the absence. The relationship between them may be based on similarity or continuity. In the first case, the relationship is metaphorical; in the second, it is metonymic or synecdochic. This corresponds to Jakobson's two semantic lines along which the development of a discourse may take place.[52]

The symbol based on a metaphorical relationship is in Chinese poetics called "bi er xing," i.e. "the xing that is also a bi," and the symbol based on a metonymic/synecdochic relationship falls into the category of "fu er xing," i.e. "the xing that is also a fu."[53] Metonymy and synecdoche involve some literal or referential connection between tenor and vehicle. They are often contrasted with metaphor in which no such relationship is apparent. "Metonymy places us in the

historical world of events and situations, whereas metaphor asserts connections on the basis of a deep logic that underlies any use of words."[54] Metaphor entails the sharing of similarities and meaning; whereas metonymy/synecdoche relies on associations that build up over time or develop out of specific context. In Chinese poetry, there are symbols based on resemblance and contiguity. Sometimes the same symbol, when appearing in different context, may be either metaphorical or metonymic. The willow, for example, when used as a symbol of separation, is metonymic/synecdochic, for it is associated with a custom of seeing people off with willow branches plucked. But when it is used as a symbol for a courtesan or a singing girl, its symbolic sense arises out of the similarities between the girl and the willow tree.[55] However it is the symbol based on contiguity that deserves our special attention here, for this kind of symbol predominates in Chinese poetry and perhaps, to a lesser extent, in modern Western poetry as well.

There has been much controversy about the use of the two terms - "metonymy" and "synecdoche." Some critics hold that synecdoche is a subspecies of metonymy.[56] Others consider synecdoche the basic trope, from which metaphor and metonymy are derived.[57] It is unnecessary here to force a distinction between them. I have chosen synecdoche in this discussion of symbolism for two reasons. First, etymologically speaking, metonymy means "change of name," "misnomer," which is hardly the case of the *xing* or the symbol as we understand them. Synecdoche, on the other hand, means "act of taking together," "understanding one thing with another," which has an undisputable affinity with the symbol and symbolism. Secondly, metonymy may have the meaning of using the quality of a thing to refer to the thing itself, involving a reduction from quality to quantity, from incorporeal to corporeal. This use runs counter to the basic use of the *xing* and the symbol in which the concrete, as a rule, is used to suggest the abstract or the spiritual, never the other way round. Synecdoche does not involve such reduction and therefore is more compatible with the functions and properties of the symbol.

The synecdochic discussed in this context is not merely a rhetorical device; its meaning may be best expressed with Blake's verses:

> To see a World in a Grain of Sand,
> And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,
> Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand,
> And Eternity in an hour.
> A Robin Redbreast in a Cage.
> Puts all Heaven in a Rage.[58]

As has been said, Romantic thinkers based their theory of symbolism on the organic world view. Goethe maintained that God or the Great One could be known through particular nature objects and events.[59] He urged poets not to "look for anything back of the phenomena"; for the teaching lies with the phenomena themselves.[60] Grasping the particular, you apprehend the universal. Coleridge described the symbol as "a translucence of the special in the individual, or the general in the special, or the universal in the general; above all by the translucence of the eternal through and in the temporal." He made it absolutely clear that what he meant by the symbol is the synecdochic:

> It (the symbol) always partakes of the reality which it renders intelligible; and while it enunciates the whole, abides itself as a living part in the unity of which it is the representation.[61]

From these statements we may draw the conclusion that a symbol as the synecdochic may involve three antitheses: part and whole, the particular and the universal or the general, and the temporal and the eternal. All these antitheses are implied, if not explicitly expressed, in the Chinese theory of the *xing*. There are three levels of significance of the synecdochic as a symbolic way of expression. On the first level, the essence or the spirit of a thing may be expressed symbolically by means of an object which constitutes part of the thing. Liu Xizai, speaking of the *xing* as applied in the *jueju* (or the quatrain), said, "the singing of the birds manifests spring; the chirping of insects suggests autumn. This is Nature's way of expressing itself through objects."[62] "The spirit of the mountain cannot be described; yet it can be represented by means of mist and cloud. The spirit of

spring cannot be described; yet it can be represented by means of grass and trees. If there is no imagery available, the spirit has nowhere to reside."[63]

On the second level, human feelings and emotions may be suggested through the presentation or representation of objects. The *Shi jing* has these lines:

117. When we left home
The willows were softly swaying;
Now as we return home
Snowflakes are flying.[64]

The speaker does not say what his feelings are like or what his thoughts are on returning home after long absence due to a military campaign, he just mentions two things - swaying willows and falling snow, both of which are part of his life experience he has had when he sets off and when he returns. These two things and the contrast formed between them suggest a feeling which is otherwise difficult to express.

On the third level, the Tao of the universe may be manifested through the presentation of nature objects. This principle applies to all the three Chinese major schools of thoughts. According to Confucianism, the flying of the hawk and the leaping of the fish are manifestations of the great Way.[65] According to Taoism, the Tao lies in whatever meets the eye.[66] According to Buddhism, "The Mountain Sumeru might be placed within a mustard seed."[67] Since the Mountain Sumeru, the Buddhist holy mountain, is itself a symbol of Buddhist truth, this statement means that the mustard seed, though tiny, may embody the "genuine thusness [*Bhutatathata*]." Thus a Chinese poet, no matter what kind of philosophy he believes in, would find it desirable to express his experience of the Tao by means of representation of nature objects or landscapes. Then all these principles concerning the poetic use of the synecdochic may ultimately come down to the employment of objects in expressing something beyond private life of a poet and the realm of reality.

It has been suggested that since the Romantic age, "Western poetry has groped its way towards the condition of Chinese (poetry)." And the process has

been called "the dominance of the object."[68] It is not necessarily a matter of influence that has worked behind this evolution. It is, rather, the inward development of the language, literature, thought and society as a whole that has played a decisive role in bringing Chinese and Western poetics together. We therefore may try to probe into the deeper immanent reasons that underlie the similarities and comparability between Chinese and modern Western poetics.

The first possible reason that comes to my mind is the psychological activities common to any literary creation; especially those concerning the interplay between the conscious and the unconscious and between the writer's mind and the world around him. The psychological theories may certainly explain many of the essential qualities of the *xing* and symbolism; but it may not explain why it is modern Western poetry and poetics that are more comparable with classical Chinese poetry and poetics; for it would be unthinkable to suggest that modern Westerners, rather than their ancestors, are psychologically more similar to ancient Chinese. In view of the historical evolution of Chinese and Western literatures, I would propose that there are three major aspects deserve our special attention. They are: the feeling for nature, the idea of the oneness of all things, and the predominance of the lyric poetry in both classical Chinese poetry and modern Western poetry.

The issue of the feeling for nature, its evolution and transformation, its influence on the poetic creation and its reflection in literary works, is all too big and too complicated a top for me to deal with at the end of a thesis. Suffice it to say that what Marjorie Nicolson calls "one of the most profound revolutions in thought" - change in man's attitudes toward mountains - did not take place in the West until the middle of the eighteenth century.[69] It is during the Romantic age that the "real" landscape poetry began to emerge in large numbers; while in China, landscape poetry came to maturity during the Six Dynasties. This perhaps in one aspect explains why classical Chinese poetry and poetics are more comparable with modern Western poetry and poetics since the Romantic age. Here I should like to

go a little further to discuss the other two aspects - the notion of the oneness of all things in China and the West, and the relationship between symbolism and lyricism.

7.5 *Xing*, Symbol and the Oneness of All things

Underlying the theory of the *xing* is the ancient Chinese world view of the unity of Heaven and man. The word "Heaven" is used here in a sense very close to "Nature." This world view holds that all things are different only in their appearances, their essence is the one and the same; Heaven and man correspond to and influence each other. The laws and rules that govern the movement and change of Heaven should also be observed by man in all his activities. Briefly, this theory may be summarised as follows:

1. The human being is an element of the universe. Man is created by Heaven and Earth and these three constitutes the Great Trio [*San cai* 三才], which gives rise to all things. "Heaven gives them birth, Earth nourishes them, and Man perfects."[70]

2. Man is an indispensable element of a perfect universe. Heaven, Earth, the *yin* and *yang*, the five elements [*wu xing* 五行 i.e., wood, fire, earth, metal, water] together with man, they make ten. "Heaven's number is with this made complete."[71]

3. Within the universe exists the *qi* of the *yin* and *yang*. Man, like everything else, is constantly immersed in the *qi*. Because of the movement and change of the *qi*, things are able to affect each other.

4. Between Heaven and man exists a series of correspondences; e.g., man has 366 lesser joints of the body, which correspond to the number of days in a year; and the 12 divisions of the larger joints correspond to the number of months. Between Earth

and man there also exists a series of correspondences. Man's body has its orifices and veins which correspond to the forms of rivers and valleys.[72]

5. There are also correspondences between the human body and the state. In the *Baopu zi*, Ge Hong writes, "Thus the body of a man is the image of a State. The thorax and abdomen correspond to the palaces and offices. The four limbs correspond to the frontiers and boundaries. The divisions of the bones and sinews correspond to the functional distinctions of the hundred officials...."[73]

6. Heaven possesses the *qi* of joy and anger, and the feeling of sorrow and happiness, which correspond to man's feeling. "Placed in a category, Heaven and man are one."[74]

7. The laws that governs nature apply to human beings and human society as well; or rather, human beings and human society must imitate Heaven and abide by its Tao. Lao Zi says, "Man follows Earth; Earth follows Heaven; Heaven follows Tao; Tao follows itself."[75]

8. Things that belong to the same classes resonate with or energise each other. "Things of the same genus energise each other."[76] "The chhi [qi] of like things intercommunicate, and their natures being mutually stimulated, respond."[77]

9. Thus natural phenomena have implications in the human world. "When a great ruler is about to arise auspicious omens first appear; when a ruler is about to be destroyed, there are baleful ones beforehand."[78]

These ideas are more or less shared by all the three major Chinese schools of thought - Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. There are of course differences between them. Confucians tend to lay stress on the one-to-one correspondence between the ethics of human actions and the parallel behaviour of the heavenly bodies and on the obedience of man to the will of Heaven. Taoists would lay stress on a mysterious equality among the myriad things and the integration of individual human being with nature. To them, the Tao resides in everything alike, be it noble or low, and everyone is supposed to follow the Tao. Buddhists, on the other hand,

are likely to be more interested in seeing nature as the embodiment or manifestation of Buddhist truth.

The relation between the theory of the unity of Heaven and man and the theory of the *xing* is obvious. For instance, Zheng Xuan's definition of the *xing* that "in the *xing*, good things are cited to imply an analogy to a current merit," is based on one of the principles set forth by Dong Zhongshu - "Lovely things summon others among the class of lovely things; repulsive things summon others among the class of repulsive things."[79] Critics of later generations who abide by the Confucian tradition are prone to interpret the *xing* as a correspondence between nature objects and human situations or between two kinds of people in the same category, such as that between wives and ministers. Critics who are exposed to Taoist or Buddhist influence tend to conceive the *xing* as manifestation or embodiment of the Tao or Buddha-nature, as is often said that for the Taoist, "the Tao resides in whatever meets the eye"[80] and for the Chan Buddhist, "Green bamboos are all *dharmakaya* [Buddhahood]; yellow flowers are all *prajna* [wisdom]."[81]

As has been said, what underlies the Western theories of symbolism is the idea of the oneness of all things and the universal correspondence.[82] This idea can be traced back to ancient Greece. Heracleitus, for example, said "All is One;" "All things are One."[83] The analogy between the human body and the world of nature prevailed from early Greek times through the Middle Ages and much of the Renaissance.[84] That is to say, this idea which is parallel to the Chinese notion of the unity of Heaven and man had been held in the West up till the sixteenth century when the Industrial Revolution caused the old tradition of organicism to break down and ushered in a new and mechanical age. Then the dominant cosmic model based on the Galileo-Newtonian theory proclaimed a new idea of the oneness of all things - that the whole universe is a big machine and that everything from the fall of an apple to the movement of planets is governed by a single law.[85]

The rise of the Romantic movement was accompanied by a new world view which represents a break with the mechanical view and a return to organism. Major

Romantic thinkers are all champions of organic theory and the idea of the oneness of all things. As has been said, Goethe based his distinction between allegory and symbolism on the organic theory. Coleridge, among others, developed a series of organic concepts in aesthetics. To him, it is the idea of the oneness of all things and "the consubstantiality" of the subject and the object that makes symbolism possible.[86]

The French Symbolists were greatly influenced by the theory of universal analogy and correspondence revived and expounded by Swendenborg. The influence of Swedenborg's theosophical ideas reached America and extended to Modernist poets. Emerson was a believer and the young Yeats, a founding member of a hermetic society, was certainly a disciple.[87]

It is indeed no mere coincidence that symbolism in Chinese tradition and symbolism in Western tradition should have so much in common when we recognize that they are based on similar philosophical assumptions. So far we have kept the comparison of these two traditions within the range of "parallel studies." But there is no reason for us to rule out completely the possibility of influence. Classical Chinese poetics definitely has considerable influence on modern Western poets. The imagists are a conspicuous example.[88] On the other hand, French Symbolism and Modernism certainly have influenced a whole generation of Chinese poets of the first half of the present century.[89] But the influence by no means stops here. We know that behind the pantheism of Goethe, Schelling and other German thinkers of that era is Spinoza the pantheist and behind Swedenborg the theosophist is Leibniz the rationalist. But who are behind Spinoza and Leibniz? Needham has traced the thread of the philosophy of organism and found that "it leads through Hegel to Leibniz ... and then it seems to disappear." He then suggests that the thread could be traced further back to the doctrines of Neo-Confucian school of Chu Hsi [Zhu Xi], "as they were transmitted to him through the Jesuit translations and despatches."[90] This is certainly an exciting subject for students of comparative poetics; yet it is definitely no place to carry on a lengthy discussion. Here I should

like to conclude the present study by proposing another important reason that underlies the comparability and similarity between classical Chinese poetics and modern Western poetics - the predominance of the lyric poetry.

7.6 The *Xing*, the Symbolic and the Lyric

In the history of Chinese poetry, there has been no epic, no dramatic poetry with which Western readers are familiar. Lyric poetry has always been the predominant genre. The three major types of Chinese poetry are the *shi* 詩 , the *ci* 詞 and the *qu* 曲 . The *ci* and the *qu* are one hundred per cent lyrical poetry and so is the overwhelming majority of the *shi*. Only a handful of poems that fall into the category of the *shi* are narrative poems. Even in these poems, it is often the poet's feeling about the story rather than the story itself that is the real focus of interest. In this sense, they are legitimately lyrical poems. Chinese poetics begins with and derives from the study of lyric. The first important document in Chinese history of literary criticism is the *Da xu*, which is a preface to the *Shi jing*, a collection of lyrical poems.

According to the *Da xu*, lyric poetry "proceeds from emotion" and is its verbal manifestation. Poets and critics of various generations have repeated again and again that the aim of poetry is "to sing of human nature and emotions." While maintaining that emotion is the fundamental element of poetry, Chinese poetics has also upheld that poetry is not supposed to be an unchecked outpouring of emotions. In one of the Confucian classics, poetry is defined as "to restrain,"[91] in the sense that poetry restrains human feelings and emotions or, rather, in poetry, human feelings and emotions are well disciplined and regulated. They are disciplined both morally, ethically and artistically. Confucius is said to have praised the appropriate expression of emotion in the first poem of the *Shi jing*, saying it is "expressive of enjoyment without being licentious, and of grief without being hurtfully

excessive."[92] The *Da xu* makes it clear that poetry should "stop at what propriety permits."[93] On the other hand, human feelings and emotions in poetry are restrained by artistic form. Poetry may originate in the spontaneous overflow of human feelings and emotions, yet this spontaneous overflow itself is not poetry just as natural sound is not ready-made music. For sounds to become music, the *Da xu* contends, they must form patterns,[94] that is, they must be regularized into melody. Likewise in poetry, the poet's intention should be "conveyed in an artistic form and presented indirectly." Chinese poets and critics have maintained that good poetry should be "moderate, gentle, sincere and deep-going."[95]

A crucial principle that has been established and upheld by Chinese poets and critics is that poetry should evoke rather than state, show rather than tell, and resort to intuitive symbols rather than demonstrate any logical consistency of image and metaphor. These are exactly the meanings the term *xing* connotes as it has been most frequently used. Apart from this aesthetic and affecting reason, there is the cognitive reason. An emotion or an idea may be difficult to comprehend and express and can be comprehended and conveyed only through the contemplation and representation of the external world that arouses the emotion and the idea and mirrors the subjectivity. Shen Deqian said,

> When a situation is found difficult to explain sufficiently, it is common practice to represent it by drawing on things of a certain category. When an accumulated emotion calls for expression and heavenly mechanism is involuntarily triggered, the emotion is often expressed through the employment of objects. By alternative use of the *bi* and the *xing* and by repeatedly singing and chanting, the feelings of joy or sorrow which have been stored inside will be implicitly conveyed. The language may be simple; the emotion is profound. If straightforward statement is employed and no implicitness can be spoken of, it would be impossible to evoke the reader's emotion with emotionless language.[96]

This has clearly shown from both aesthetical and cognitive needs the absolute necessity of exploring and expressing emotion and thought by means of external things.

It is perhaps not surprising that this way of thinking and expression should find sympathy in modern Western poetics since the Romantic era. Geoffrey Thurley wrote, "There were, in fact, profound parallels between the basic aesthetic of Chinese literature and the western European literature that had come into being since about the middle of the eighteenth century, ... English readers find a conspicuous and unaccountable modernity in the poetry of, say, sixth century China or seventeenth century Japan."[97] Thurley attributed this unlikely but nonetheless substantial parallel to the "social disintegration and religious scepticism" in the Western world.[98] He might have touched an important reason underlying the "coming together" of the Oriental and Occidental attitudes toward poetry. However, the direct and intrinsic reason, I would argue, has to be sought within literary study itself: this most extraordinary parallel proceeds from the fact that both traditional Chinese poetics and modern Western poetics are essentially poetics of the lyric. By contrast, the Aristotelian poetics, which constitutes the mainstay of the Classical and neo-Classical poetics in Western literature, is the poetics of drama and especially of tragedy.[99]

In the West, the late eighteenth century saw an inversion of aesthetic values. Lyric poetry was no longer regarded as an unconsidered trifle but gradually became "the chief glory of the Romantic movement."[100] Although there have been lyrical poems at any and every period of Western literary history, the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have looked upon the lyric largely as their own work. The major achievements of Romanticism, Symbolism and Imagism - the three movements which contributed most to the modern Western poetics - are their lyrical poems. Modern critics have largely recourse to the lyric as the paradigm for poetic theory. Langer has pointed out that lyric is "the readiest instance of poesies."[101]

Lyric poetry is the *chant interieur*, "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings." "The genuine lyric," Hegel said, "has to express the true contents of the human heart."[102] The contents of the heart are "the momentary and most fleeting mood, the heart's jubilant cry, the quickly passing flashes of carefree happiness and

merriment, the outbursts of melancholy, dejection and lament;" in short, "the whole gamut of feeling" seized in its momentary movements.[103] Therefore, according to Hegel, "what is most completely lyrical, is a mood of the heart concentrated on a concrete situation."[104] These words by Hegel have furnished the best descriptions about the lyric. To these words, Palgrave's famous definition is a good resounding: "Lyrical has been held essentially to imply that each Poem shall turn on some single thought, feeling, or situation."[105] Thus, in the West, as in China, the lyric means the expression of personal feelings and emotions and the lyric of emotion or feeling has practically become synonymous with "poetry" through the criticism of the romantic school.

Again in the West, as in China, for aesthetic as well as cognitive reasons, feelings and emotions cannot and should not be nakedly stated or described but need to be evoked, to be conveyed indirectly through the representation of objects; that is, human feeling must finally realize itself in things and in reflected images. However, this objectification of emotion is not only an aesthetic must, but also an inevitable outcome. For emotion is intentional, to be emotionally aroused must involve objects. To love always means to love somebody or something. And "emotions are specified by their objects."[106] These objects, these reflected images, which are ensigned with the mission of exploring and conveying personal feelings, emotions and ideas in tight construction, are none other than symbols. Thus John S. Mill observed,

> Poetry is feeling confessing itself to itself, in moments of solicitude and embodying itself in *symbols which are the nearest possible representations of the feeling in the exact shape* in which it exists in the poet's mind.[107]

By "poetry," Mill here certainly means the lyric. Thus it has become very clear that in China and in the West, the *xing* and symbolism are both theories of the lyric. They are both inextricably related to lyricism. It is in this respect, perhaps more than any others, that the traditional Chinese poetics and the modern Western poetics have come closely together and are in great sympathy with each other.

Notes:

Chapter 1

1. Shang Chengzuo 商承祚, *Yin qi yi chun kao shi* 殷契佚存攷釋, 2 vols (Nanjing: Jinlin Daxue, 1933), II, p.62.
2. Guo Moruo 郭沫若, *Boci tong zhuan kao shi* 卜辭通纂攷釋, 4 vols (Tokyo: Bunkyudo, 1933) III, p.34.
3. Shih-hsiang Chen, "The Shi-jing: Its Generic Significance in Chinese History and Poetics," in *Studies in Chinese Literary Generes*, ed. by Cyril Birch (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974), p.23.
4. *Zhou li*周禮, "Chunguan, Dashi" 春官·大師, in *Zhou li zhu su* 周禮注疏, annot. by Jia Gongyan 賈公彥, in *Wenyuange sikuquanshu* 文淵閣四庫全書 (hereafter referred to as *Wenyuange*), *juan* 27 (Taipei, 1983-1986), 90-429/a. All translations are mine unless otherwise noted.
5. Cf. Zhang Binglin 章炳麟, *Jian lun* 檢論, "Liushi shuo" 六詩說, *juan* 2, in *Zhang Shi cong shu* 章氏叢書, 2 vols (rpt, Taipei: Shijie Shuju, 1958), I, p.523; Guo Shaoyu 郭紹虞, "Liuyi shuo kao bian," 六義說考辨 in *Zhonghua wenshi luncong* 中華文史論叢 (Shanghai: Guji Chubanshe, 1978), vol.VII, pp.211-6; Chow Ts'e-Tsung 周策縱, *Gu wuyi yu liushi kao* 古巫醫與六詩考 (Taipei: Lianjin, 1986), pp.213-231.

6. *Mao shi zhu su* 毛詩注疏 , *juan* 1, "Guan ju" 關雎 , *Wenyuange*, 69-118.

7. See, e.g. Ye Lang 葉朗 , *Zhongguo meixue shi dagang* 中國美學史大綱 (Shanghai: Renmin, 1985), pp.90-4.

8. See Shih-hsiang Chen, "The *Shi-jing*: Its Generic Significance in Chinese History and Poetics," in Cyril Birch ed., *Studies in Chinese Literary Genres* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974), pp.20-6; Chow Ts'e-tsung, *Gu wuyi yu Liushi kao*, pp.213-231.

9. Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought* (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), p.18.

10. Gu Jiegang 顧頡剛 , "Qi xing," 起興 in *Gu shi bian* 古史辨 , ed. by Gu Jiegang and Lo Genze 羅根澤 , 5 vols (Beijing: Pushe, 1920-1933), III, p.675.

11. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1974), p.2e.

12. Cf. Wittgenstein, §23, p.11e; Roman Jakobson, "Linguistics and Poetics," in *Modern Criticism and Theory*, ed. by David Lodge (London: Longman, 1988), p.37.

13. Hippolyte A. Taine, *History of English Literature*, trans. H. Van Laun (London: Chatto & Windus, 1906), p.23ff.

14. John S. Mill, *A System of Logic, Ratiocinative and Inductive*, Book I-III, in *Selected Works*, vol.VII, ed., J.M.Robson (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973), p.133.

15. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §§23,66, pp.11e,31e,32e.

16. Wittgenstein, §§67,77, pp.32e,36e.

17. James J. Y. Liu, *Chinese Theories of Literature* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1975), p.2.

18. James Liu, *Chinese Theories of Literature*, pp.7-9.

19. Tzvetan Todorov, "The Notion of Literature," *NLH*, vol.v, 1 (Autumn, 1973), p.16.

20. *Shi jing* 詩 經 , "Xiao ya, He ming" 小雅 · 鶴鳴 , in *The Book of Odes*, trans. by Bernhard Karlgren (Stockholm: The Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, 1950), p.127. Hereafter translations quoted from this book will be noted in the text.

21. See, e.g., Geoffrey Thurley, *The Romantic Predicament* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983), p.62; James Liu, *Chinese Theories of Literature*, p.53.

22. Goethe, *Conversations of Goethe with Eckermann*, trans. by John Oxenford and ed. by J.K.Moorhead, Everyman's Library edn (London: J.M.Dent & Sons, 1930), p.282.

Chapter 2

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3. *Xun zi* 荀 子 , *juan* 8, "Ru xiao pian" 儒 效 篇 , *in Wenyuange*, 695-151.

4. *Mencius* 孟 子 , "Li lou, Part II" 離 婁 下 , in James Legge, II, p.327.

5. Zhang Xuecheng 章學誠 , *Wen shi tong yi* 文史通義 , "Shi jiao A" 詩 教 上 , *Guoxue jiben cunshu* edn

(Shanghai: Shangwu, 1935), p.19; also included in *Zhongguo lidai wenlun xuan* 中國歷代文論選, ed. by Guo Shaoyu 3 vols (Hong Kong: Zhonghua Shuju, 1979), I, p.297.

6. Sima Qian, *Shi ji* 史記, *juan* 70, "Taishigong zi xu" 太史公自序, x, p.3300.

7. Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒, *Chun qiu fan lu* 春秋繁露, "Ji yi pian" 祭義篇, in *Chun qiu fan lu jin zhu jin yi* 春秋繁露今注今譯, annot. by Lai Yanyuan 賴炎元, (Taipei: Shangwu, 1984), p.411.

8. Cf. Lin Qingzhang 林慶彰, ed., *Shi jing yanjiu lun ji* 詩經研究論集 (Taipei: Xueshen Shuju, 1983), p.35.

9. 同類相動, trans. by E. R. Hughes, cited in Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China*, 6 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), II, p.281.

10. *Lun yu* 論語, "Taibo" 泰伯. Cf. James Legge, I, p.211.

11. *Lun yu* 論語, "Yang Huo" 陽貨. Cf. Legge, I, p.323.

12. See Hu Nianyi 胡念貽, "Shi jing zhong de fu, bi, xing," 詩經中的賦比興 *Wenxue yichan zengkan* 文學遺產增刊, 1, (1957), p.4.

13. Ho Yan 何晏, *Lun yu ji jie* 論語集解, in *lun yu ji jie yi su* 論語集解義疏, annot. by Ho Yan and Huang Kan 皇侃, *Wenyuange*, 195-410/a.

14. Zhu Xi 朱熹, *Lun yu ji zhu* 論語集注, *juan* 4 and *juan* 9, in *Wenyuange*, 197-43 and 197-81/a.

15. James Liu, *Chinese Theories of Literature*, p.108; Donald Holzman, "Confucius and Ancient Chinese Literary Criticism," in *Chinese Approaches to Literature*, ed. by Adele Rickett (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), p.36.

16. Li Zehou 李澤厚 and Liu Ganji 劉綱紀 , *Zhongguo meixue shi* 中國美學史 , 2 vols (Beijing: Renmin, 1984 & 1987), I, p.123.

17. Another possible interpretation of the word *xing* in this context is "to make prosperous," see *Shi jing cidian* 詩經詞典 , ed. by Xiang Xi 何熹, , (Chengdu: Sichuan Renmin, 1986).

18. In Mo Zi 墨子 , a contemporary of Confucius, and in Mencius and Xun Zi alike, the word *xing* almost invariably means to rise, to raise, to arouse, or to elevate.

19. *Lun yu* 論語, "Wei Lin Gong" 衛靈公 , trans., Legge, I, p.294.

20. *Lun yu* 論語, "Tai Bo" 泰伯 , trans. in Legge, I, p.208.

21. *Mencius* 孟子 , "Jin xin, Part II" 盡心下 , in Legge, II, p.485.

22. Li Zehou and Liu Gangji, I, p.124.

23. *Lun yu* 論語, "Wei zhen" 為政 ; cf. Legge, I, p.146. Here Confucius quotes a line from the *Shi jing*, poem no.297, which reads, "With their chariot they go, vigorously without swerving." (Karlgren, p.254) The line is a description of running horses.

24. *Lun yu* 論語, "Xue er" 學而 , trans. by Holzman, in *Chinese Approaches to Literature*, p.30. Cf. Legge, I, p.144.

25. *Lun yu* 論語, "Ba yi" 八佾 , my translation. Cf. Legge, I, p.157; Holzman, p.31.

26. John Erskine, *The Elizabeth Lyric* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1916), p.5.

27. See, for example, Luo Genze 羅根澤 , *Zhongguo wenxue piping shi*
(Shanghai, Gudian wenxue chubanshe, 1957), p.39.

28. *Lun yu*, "Wei Lin Gong." Cf. Legge, I, p.298.

29. *Lun yu*, "Ba yi," in Legge, I, p.161.

30. Xun Zi 荀子, "Yue lun" 樂論, in the *Xun zi*, *juan* 14, *Wenyuange*, 694-245 (italics mine).

31. Cf. Zhang Binglin, *Jian lun*, in *Zhang Shi cong shu*, I, p.523.

32. *Mao shi zhu su*, *juan* 1, "Tiyao" 提要, in *Wenyuange*, 69-1f.

33. Ban Gu 班固, "Lian du fu xu," 两都賦序 in *Wen xuan Li zhu yi su* 文選李注義疏, annot. by Gao Buyin 高步瀛, 4 vols (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1985), I, p.4.

34. Ban Gu, *Han shu* 漢書, "Yi wen zhi" 藝文志, included in *Zhongguo lidai wenlun xuan*, I, p.106.

35. *Mencius* 孟子, "Wan zhang, part I" 萬章上. Cf. Legge, II, p.353 and p.392.

36. For example, Wang Guowei pointed out that Zheng Xuan annotated the *Shi jing* in accordance with the principles set forth by Mencius. See Wang Guowei, "Yu Xishen shi nianpu hui jian xu 玉溪生詩年譜會箋序," in *Zhongguo lidai wenlun xuan*, I, p.17.

37. *Mao shi zhu su* 毛詩注疏, *juan* 1, "Zhou nan, Guan ju" 周南·関雎.

38. Ibid.

39. Paul de Man said, "Hermeneutics is, by definition, a process directed toward the determination of meaning; ... and will, in however mediated a way, have to raise question about the extralinguistic truth value of literary text." See his introduction to Hans Robert Jauss's *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, English edn (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), p.IX.

40. *Mao shi zhu su*, *juan* 4, "Wang, Cai ge" 王·采葛.

41. *Mao shi zhu su*, *juan* 1, "Zhounan, Zhongsi" 周南·螽斯.

42. Zhu Ziqing 朱自清, *Shi yan zhi bian* 詩言志辨, (Taipei: Kaiming, 1975), p.53.

43. *Mao shi zhu* su, *juan* 1, "Zhounan, Guanju."

44. *Mao shi zhu su, juan* 2, "Bei, Gufeng" 邶·谷風.

45. *Mao shi zhu* su, *juan* 1, "Zhou nan, Lin zhi zhi" 周南、麟之趾.

46. *Mao shi zhu su, juan* 2, "Shaonan, Quecao" 召南、鵲巢.

47. *Zhou li* 周禮, *juan* 7, "Tianguan, Siqiu" 天官、司裘, *Wenyuange*, 90-130/a.

48. *Zhou li, juan* 23, "Chunguan, Dashi" 春官、大師, *Wenyuange*, 90-429/a.

49. Ibid.

50. Wang Fu 王符, *Qian fu lun* 潛夫論, "Wu ben" 務本, annot. by Wang Jipei 汪繼培 (Shanghai: Guji, 1978), p.19.

51. *Lun yu*, "Shu er," in Legge, I, p.197.

52. *Mo zi* 墨子, "Xiao qu" 小取, in *Mo zi jian gu* 墨子閒詁, ed. and annot. by Sun Yiran 孫貽讓, 2 vols (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1986), II, p.379.

53. Sima Qian, *Shi ji* 史記, *juan* 84, "Qu Yuan Jia Shen lizhuan" 屈原賈生列傳, p.2482.

54. *Mao shi zhu su, juan* 1, "Zhounan, Guan ju."

55. *Mao shi zhu su, juan* 2, "Bei, Yan yan" 邶、燕燕.

56. *Mao shi zhu su, juan* 11, "Xiaoya, Si yue" 小雅、四月.

57. *Zhou li, juan* 23, "Tian guan," *Wenyuange*, 90-429.

58. Wang Yi 王逸, *Chu ci zhang ju* 楚辭章句, "Li sao jing zhang ju" 離騷經章句, in *Wenyuange*, 1062-3/b.

59. Burton Watson, *Early Chinese Literature* (New York: University of Columbia Press, 1971), p.231.

60. Liu Xie 劉勰, *Wen xin diao long* 文心雕龍, "Bian sao" 辨騷, in *Wen xin diao long zhu* 文心雕龍注, ed. and annot. by Fan Wenlan 范文瀾, 2 vols (Shanghai: Guji chubanshe, 1982), I, p.45.

61. Liu Xie, *Wen xin diao long*, "Xu zhi" 序志, in *Wen xin diao long zhu*, II, p.727.

62. Wang Yi, *Chu ci zhang ju*, "Chu ci zhang ju xu" 楚辭章句序, *Wenyuange*, 1062-16/a.

63. Ban Gu, "Li sao jing xu," 離騷經序, in *Zhongguo lidai wenlun xuan*, I, p.121.

64. Liu Xie, *Wen xin diao long*, "Bi xing" 比興, in *Wen xin diao long zhu*, II, p.602.

65. Zhu Xi 朱熹, *Chu ci ji zhu* 楚辭集註, *juan* 1, "Li sao jing di yi," 離騷經第一, *Wenyuange*, 1062-303/b.

66. Ibid.

67. Zhu Ziqing, *Shi yan zhi bian*, p.88.

68. David Hawkes, trans., *Ch'u Tz'u: The Song of the South*, (London: Penguin, 1985). All the other quotations from Qu Yuan in this chapter are taken from this book and will be noted in the text with their distich numbers.

69. Wang Yi, *Chu ci zhang ju*, in *Wenyuange*, 1062-13/a; Zhu Xi, *Chu ci ji zhu*, in *Wenyuange*, 1062-213/a.

70. *Chu ci zhang ju*, in *Wenyuange*, 1062-10/a.

71. *Chu ci zhang ju*, in *Wenyuange*, 1062-6/b.

72. You guoen 游國恩, *Chu ci lunwen ji* 楚辭論文集, (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1965), p.192.

73. Hellmut Wilhelm, "The scholar's frustration: notes on a type of 'Fu'," in *Chinese Thought and Institutions*, ed. by John K.Fairbank (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p.402, n.46.

74. Immanuel Kant: *The Critique of Judgement*, trans. by James Creed Meredith (Oxford: Clarendon, 1952), p.223.

75. *Zuo zhuan*, 左傳 "Xianggong ershiqi nian" 襄公二十又年 , in *Chun qiu zuo zhuan zhu*, 春秋左傳註 , ed. by Yang Bojun 楊伯峻 , 4 vols (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1981), III, p.1134.

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77. Ricoeur, p.31.

78. Ibid.

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81. Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor*, trans. by Robert Czerna (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), p.148.

82. *Lun yu*, "Yang Huo" 陽貨 .

83. Zhu Xi, *Shi jing ji zhuan*, 詩經集傳 , in *Wenyuange*, 72-747.

84. Zhu Xi, *Shi jing ji zhuan*, *Wenyuange*, 72-757.

85. Zhu Xi, *Zhu zi yu lei*, 朱子語類 ed. by Li Jingde 黎靖德 , 8 vols (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1983), VI, p.2070.

86. Cf. Burton Watson, *Chinese Lyricism* (New York: University of Columbia Press, 1971), p.24.

87. Zhu Xi, *Zhu Zi yu lei*, VI, p.2069.

88. I.A.Richards, for instance, said "When hungry and when replete we respond differently to the stimulus of a smell of cooking." See *Principles of Literary Criticism* (London: Routledge Kegan Paul, 1926), pp.86-7.

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90. Yao Jiheng 姚際恒, *Shi jing tong lun* 詩經通論, (Shanghai: Zhonghua, 1958), p.1.

91. Xu Wei 徐渭, "Feng Shiji xianshen shu" 奉師季先生書, in *Xu Wei ji* 徐渭集, 4 vols (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1984), II, p.458.

92. Gu Jiegan, "Qi xing," in *Gu shi bian*, III, p.676.

93. Xu Fuguan 徐復觀, "She shi de bi xing" 釋詩的比興, in *Shi jing yanjiu lun ji*, p.81.

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111. Cf. Terence Hawkes, *Structuralism and Semiotics* (London: Methuen, 1977), p.129.

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Chapter 3

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41. Liu Xie, "Bi xing," in *Wen xin diao long zhu*, II, p.603. Cf. Shih, *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, p.383.

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55. 習小而弃大 Liu Xie, "Bi xing" in *Wen xin diao long zhu*, II, p.602.

56. Liu Xie, "Bi xing," in *Wen xin diao long zhu*, II, p.601.

57. *Mao shi zhu su, juan* 1, *Wenyuange*, 69-120/b.

58. Qian Zhongshu, *Guan zui bian*, I, p.63.

59. Liu Xie, "Yin xiu," in *Wen xin diao long zhu*, p.632; cf. Zhou Zhenfu, *Wen xin diao long xuan yi*, p.240, Vincent Shih, *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, p.415.

60. Liu Xie, "Bi xing," in *Wen xin diao long zhu*, II, p.602.

61. Ibid.

62. Cf. Wang Yuanhua, *Wen xin diao long chuangzuo lun*, p.163.

63. Quoted in *Wen xin diao long zhu*, II, p.606.

64. Zhong Rong 鍾嶸, *Shi pin*, 詩品 , in *Shi pin zhu* 詩品注 , annot. by Chen Yanjie 陳延傑 (Hong Kong: Shangwu, 1959), p.1. English translation by John Timothy Wixted in his "The Nature of Evaluation in the *Shih-p'in*," included in Susan Bush and Christian Murck, eds., *Theories of the Arts in China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), p.230.

65. Chen Yanjie, p.4; trans. Wixted, in *Theories of the Arts in China*, p.239.

66. Chen Yanjie, pp.4-5; trans. Wixted, in *Theories of the Arts in China*, pp.239-40.

67. Sun Chuo 孫綽 , "San Yue san ri lan ting shi xu" 三月三日蘭亭詩序 , in *Quan Shangu Sandai Qin Han Sanguo Liuchao wen*, II, p.1808/a.

68. Hegel, *Aesthetics*, II, p.1113.

69. Chen Yanjie, p.6; trans. Wixted, in *Theories of the Arts in China*, p.240.

70. See E.M.W.Tillyard, *Poetry, Direct and Oblique* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1934), p.6.

71. Chen Yanjie, *Shi pin zhu*, p.6.

72. Ibid.

73. Chen Yanjie, *Shi pin zhu*, p.17; trans., Wixted, in *Theories of the Arts in China*, pp.241-2.

74. Chen Yanjie, p.4; my translation adapted from Wixted, in *Theories of the Arts in China*, p.238.

75. Huang Kan 黃侃 , *Wen xin diao long za ji* 文心雕龍札記 (Shanghai: Zhonghua, 1962), p.173.

76. Chen Yanjie, *Shi pin zhu*, pp.14, 20; trans., Wixted, in *Theories of the Arts in China*, p.237.

77. Yeh Chia-ying and J.W. Walls, "Theory, Standards and Practice of Criticizing Poetry in Chung Hung's *Shih-P'in*," in *Studies in Chinese Literature*, ed. by J.L.Bishop (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1965), p.56.

78. Chen Yanjie, *Shi pin zhu*, p.20, my translation.

79. John Senior, *The Way Down and Out, the Occult in Symbolist Literature* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1959), p.44.

Chapter 4

1. See 3.1.
2. Zhi Yu, *Wenzhang liu bie lun*, in *Quan Shanggu, Sandai, Qin, Han, Sanguo, Liuchao Wen*, II, p.1905; Wu Qiao 吳喬, *Wei lu shi hua* 圍爐詩話, *Sheyuan cong shu*, 103-9/b.
3. Liu Xie, *Wen xin diao long*, "Bi xing," in *Wen xin diao long zhu*, II, p.601.
4. Li Zhongmeng's definition is first quoted in Hu Yin's "Yu Li Shuyi shu" 與李淑易書 and seen in Hu Yinling 胡應麟, *Kun xue ji wen* 困學記聞, annot. by Weng Yuanqi 翁元圻, 3 vols (Shanghai: Shangwu, 1935), I, p.223; also seen in Wang Shizhen 王世貞, "Yi yuan zhi yan," 藝苑卮言, included in Ding Fubao 丁福保, ed., *Li dai shuhua xu bian* 歷代詩話續編, 3 vols (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1983), II, p.954; and Liu Xizai 劉熙載, *Yi gai*, "Fu gai" 藝概, 賦概 (Shanghai: Guji, 1978), p.86; Shen Xianglong's definition can be seen in his "Lun ci shui bi" 論詞隨筆, in *Ci hua cong bian* 詞話叢編, ed. by Tang Guizhang 唐圭璋, 24 vols (nd., preface dated 1934), XXIII.
5. Jia Dao 賈島, *Er nan mi zhi* 二南密旨, *Xunmintang*, edn, vol. III.
6. Liu Xie, *Wen xin diao long*, "yin xiu" 文心雕龍·隱秀, in Fan Wenlan, II, p.632.
7. Zheng Qiao 鄭樵, *Liu jing ao lun*, "Du *Shi Yi* fa" 六經奧論·讀詩易法, in *Tongzhitang jing jie*, vol.474.
8. Wang Liqi 王利器, ed., *Wen jin mi fu lun jiao zhu* 文鏡秘府論校注, (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1983), p.159.

9. Wang Changling 王昌齡 , "Lun wen yi" 論文意 , in Wang Liqi, *Wen jin mi fu lun jian zhu*, p.303; Zhang Xuecheng, *Wen shi tong yi*, "Yi jiao" 文史通義·易教 , pp.5-6; Wen Yiduo, "Shuo yu," in *Wen Yiduo quan ji*, 1, p.117.

10. Zhong Rong, *Shi pin xu*, in Chen Yanjie, *Shi pin zhu*, p.1; Kong Yingda, *Shi jing zhu su*, "guan ju"; Jiao Ran, in Wang Liqi, ed., *Wen jin mi fu lun jian zhu*, p.159; Wang Fuzhi 王夫之 , *Jiangzai shihua* 薑齋詩話 (Beijing: Remin Wenxue, 1961), p.144; Chen Tingchuo 陳廷焯 , *Baiyuzai cihua* 白雨齋詞話 (Shanghai: Guji, 1984), p.278.

11. Wang Liqi, *Wen jin mi fu lun jian zhu*, p.305.

12. Wang Liqi, p.126.

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid, p.123.

15. Ibid; trans. in Joseph J. Lee, *Wang Ch'ang-ling*, (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1982), p.73.

16. Wang Liqi, p.129.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid, p.278 and p.284.

19. Xie Zhen 謝榛 , "*Siming shihua*" 四溟詩話 *juan* 3 (Beijing: Renmin Wenxue, 1961), p.77.

20. Xie Zhen, p.69.

21. See Ding Fubao 丁福保 , ed., *Qing shihua* 清詩話 , (Shanghai: Guji, 1978), p.11.

22. Wang Fuzhi 王夫之 , *Xiang zhong luo suo: san liang* 相宗絡索、三量 , in *Chuanshan yi shu* 船山遺書 ,

ed. by Li Yinghou 李英候 and others, 80 vols (Shanghai: Taipingyang Shudian, 1933), LXVI, pp.5-6.

23. Chen Ziang 陳子昂, *Yu Dongfang Zuoshi xiu zhu pian xu* 與東方左史修竹篇序, in *Zhongguo lidai wenlun xuan*, II, p.55.

24. Du Fu, in his poem "Chen Shiyi gu zhai" 陳拾遺故宅, praises the immortality of Chen's achievements, saying that "his name hangs like the sun and the moon." (See *Quan Tang shi*, IV, p.3316.) Han Yu 韓愈, while looking back at the history of Tang poetry, said, "This present dynasty floursihes in literature; [Chen] Ziang was the first to attain the lofty realm." (Han Yu, "Jian shi" 薦士, in *Quan Tang shi*, V, p.3780.) And Yuan Haowen, a critic of the Yuan dynasty, commented that for what Chen had contributed to the Tang poetry, "a gold statue of [Chen] Ziang should be cast." See Yuan Haowen 元好問, "Lun shi jueju," 論詩絕句, in *Yuan Yishan shi ji jian zhu* 元遺山詩集箋注, annot. by Shi Guoqi 施國祁, (Beijing: Renmin Wenxue, 1958), p.526.

25. My translation adapted from Wu-chi Liu and Irving Yucheng Lo, co-eds., *Sunflower Splendor: Three Thousand Years of Chinese Poetry* (New York: Anchor Books, 1975), p.89.

27. Anne Birrel, trans., *New Songs from a Jade Terrace* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986), p.19.

28. In Wang Liqi, *Wen jin mi fu lun jian zhu*, p.293.

29. Yin Fan 殷璠, "Heyue yingling ji xu" 河嶽英靈集序, in Guo Shaoyu, ed., *Zhongguo li dai wenlun xuan*, II, p.67.

30. Hu Yinling, *Shi su* 詩藪 (Shanghai, 1979), p.100 and p.195.

31. Wang Liqi, *Wen jin mi fu lun jian zhu*, p.303.

32. Yan Yu 嚴羽 , *Canglang shihua* 滄浪詩話 , "Shi ping" 詩評 , in *Canglang shihua jiao shi*, ed. and annot. by Guo Shaoyu (Beijing: Renmin, 1962), p.137.

33. See, for example, Ye Lang, *Zhongguo meixue shi dagang*, p.315.

34. Cf. Qian Zhongshu, *Tan yi lu* 談藝錄 , (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1985), pp.1-4.

35. I use the term "the Song-style poetry" to refer to poetry which is more intellectual than emotional, to be antithetical to "the Tang-style poetry." It is to be understood that not all poems written in the Song dynasty are the Song-style poetry; neither are all poems written in the Tang dynasty the Tang-style poetry.

36. Yan Yu, *Canglang shihua*, "Shi bian" 詩辨 , in *Canglang shihua jiao shi*, p.24.

37. Ibid.

38. Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, II, chapt.XIV, in *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, VII, p.8.

39. *Canglang shihua jiao shi*, p.23.

40. Ibid, p.24.

41. Quoted in Yeats, "The Symbolism of Poetry," in *Essays and Introductions* (London: Macmillan, 1969), pp.153-164, (p..

42. *Canglang shihua jiao shi*, p.24.

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid.

45. Arthur Symons, *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (New York: E.P.Dutton, 1958), p.48.

46. *Canglang shihua jiao shi*, p.24.

47. Cf. Susanne Langer, *Feeling and Form, a Theory of Art* (New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1953), p.246ff.

48. From the *Sunflower Splendor*, pp.113-4.

49. Du Fu, "Tong Yuan Shijun's *Qiuling xing xu*" 同元使君秦陵行序 , in *Quan Tang shi*, IV, p.2360.

50. Bai Juyi 白居易 , *Yu Yuan Jiu shu* 與元九書 , in *Zhongguo lidai wenlun xuan*, II, p.98.

51. Ibid, p.96.

52. Ibid.

53. Bai, "He da shi shi shou xu" 和答詩十首序 , quoted in Wang and Gu, p.262.

54. See Yeh Chia-ying, "Changzhou cipai bixing jituo zhi shuo de xin jiantao" 常州詞派比興寄托之說的新檢討in *Jialing lun ci cong gao* 迦陵論詞叢稿 (Taipei, 1983), p.322.

55. The *Da xu* 大序 says, "What is in the heart becomes poetry when put to words. When emotions stir inside, they become manifest in speech," in *Mao shi zhu su, juan* 1, included *in Zhongguo lidai wenlun xuan*, I, p.44.

56. Zhang Huiyan 張惠言 , *Ci xuan jiaodu* 詞選枝讀 , (Taipei: Yiwen, 1959), p.5.

57. Ibid.

58. Zhou Ji 周濟 , *Jiecunzai lun ci za zhu* 介存齋論詞雜著 , (Taipei: Guangwen, 1962), p.2.

59. Zhou Ji, *Song si jia ci xuan mulu xulun* 宋四家詞選目錄序論 , (Taipei: Guangwen, 1962), p.1.

60. Ibid.

61. Ibid.

62. Tan Xian 譚獻 , *Qie zhong ci* 篋中詞 , *juan* 5, *Cong shu ji cheng* edn.

63. See Chen Tingchuo, *Baiyuzai cihua*, pp.7-13, p.84, p.88.

64. Wassily Kandinsky, *Der Sturm*, in Herbert Read, *A Concise History of Modern Painting* (London: Thames, 1961), p.171.

65. Ibid.

66. Ibid.

67. Longinus, *On the Sublime*, tr. T.S.Dorsh (London: Penguin, 1965), p.121.

68. See Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, chapt.XIII.

70. Liu Xie, *Wen xin diao long*, "Shen si," in *Wen xin diao long zhu*, I, p.493, trans., Vincent Shih, *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, P.299.

71. For example, Yeh Chia-ying described the *fu*, *bi* and *xing* as three techniques in starting a poem. See Yeh, "Zhongguo gudian shige zhong xingxiang yu qingyi zhi guanxi lie shuo," in *Jialing tan shi er ji* (Taipei, 1985), p.119.

72. Liu Xie, *Wen xin diao long*, "Wu se" 物色, in *Wen xin diao long zhu*, II, p.693.

73. Liu Xie, *Wen xin diao long*, "Zhi yin" 知音, in *Wen xin diao long zhu*, II, p.715; my translation, cf. Vincent Shih, *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, p.509.

74. John S.Mill, *Literary Essays*, ed. by E.Alexander (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill, 1967), p.67.

75. Ibid, p.69.

76. Virgil C. Aldrich, *Philosophy of Art*, p.8.

77. Mill, *Literary Essays*, p.69.

78. Liu Xizai, *Yi gai* 藝概, "Shi gai" 詩概, p.51.

79. Wang Bi 王弼, *Zhou yi zhu su* 周易注疏, "Zhou yi lue li, ming xiang" 周易略例、明象, in *Wenyuange*, 7-584.

80. Wilhelm, Richard and Cary F. Baynes, trans., *The I Ching* or *Book of Changes* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968), p.322.

81. Wilhelm and Baynes, pp.328-29.

82. Lao Zi 老子, *Dao de jing* 道德經, Chapt. 21, cf. John C.H.Wu, trans. *Tao Teh Ching* (New York: St John's University Press, 1961), p.21.

83. Some translators have rendered the *xiang* in this context into form, which I think is acceptable. But I would suggest that at this stage the *xiang* refers mainly to the appearance of the primary material relatively unshaped, as A.Cowley says in his poem "Davideis," "An unshap'd kind of something first appear'd." (See *The Oxford Book of Seventeenth-Century English Verse*, p.708).

84. *Zhuang zi* 莊子, "Tian di" 天地, in Wang Xianqian 王先謙., *Zhuang zi ji jie* 莊子集解, (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1987), p.101.

85. Ernst Cassirer, *An Essay on Man* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944), p.25.

86. Lu Huiqing 呂惠卿, *Zhuang zi yi* 莊子義; in Qian Mu 錢穆, *Zhuan zi zhuan jian* 莊子纂箋 (Taipei: Dongta tushu gonsi, 1985), p.91. It may be interesting here to note that Arthur Symons describes the symbol as "luminous shade." See Symons, *The Symbolist Movement*, p.90.

87. Zhong Baihua 宗白華, *Meixue sanbu* 美學散步, (Shanghai, 1981), p.68.

Chapter 5

1. Valéry, "Avant-Propos" to *La Connaissance de la deesse* and "L'Existence du Symbolisme," pp.1272, 686, quoted in Anna Balakian, ed., *The Symbolist Movement in the Literature of European Languages* (Budapest: Akademiai Kiado, 1984), p.94.

2. John Senior, *The Way Down and Out*, p.43.

3. Wellek, "What Is Symbolism?" included in *The Symbolist Movements*, p.18.
4. Ibid.
5. C.M.Bowra, *The Heritage of Symbolism* (New York: Macmillan, 1967), p.1.
6. Susan Sontag, *Against Interpretation* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1967), p.10.
7. Wallace Fowlie, *Mallarmé* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962), p.264.
8. Cf. Charles Feidelson, *Symbolism and American Literature* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1953).
9. René Wellek, "Symbol and Symbolism in Literature," in the *Dictionary of the History of Ideas*, ed. by Philip P. Wiener, 5 vols (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973), IV, p.344.
10. Ibid, p.345.
11. Northrop Frye and others, *The Harper Handbook to Literature* (New York: Harper and Row, 1985), p.453.
12. Edmund Wilson, *Axel's Castle* (New York: The Fontana Library, 1967), p.2; Gordon E. Bigelow, *The Poet's Third Eye* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1976), p.33.
13. Henri Peyre, *What Is Symbolism?* (Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1980), p.2.
14. Geoffrey Thurley, *The Romantic Predicament* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983), p.59.
15. John Senior, *The Way Down and Out*, P.51.
16. G.W.F.Hegel, *Aesthetics*, I, p.60.
17. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, p.222.
18. *Lun yu*, "Yong ye" 論語·雍也, in Legge, I, p.192.
19. Kant, pp.224-5.

20. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, Eng. edn (New York: Crossroad, 1975), p.68.

21. Ibid.

22. See Goethe's letter to Schubert, quoted in Gadamer, p.68.

23. Goethe, *Reflexions and Maxims*, tr. by W.B. Ronnfeldt (London, nd), p.175.

24. Erich Heller, *The Disinherited Mind* (Cambridge, MA: Bowes and Bowes, 1952), p.161.

25. Heller, p.86.

26. Thomas Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus* (Everyman's Library), (London, 1984), pp.125-6.

27. See M.H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp, Romantic Theory and Critical Tradition* (London: Oxford University Press, 1977), p.206.

28. Karl Vietor, *Goethe the Thinker*, trans B.Q. Morgan (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1950), p.14.

29. He wrote in *Faust*: The man who wants to know / organic truth and describe it well / seeks first to drive the living spirit out; / he's got the parts in hand there, it's merely the breath of life that's lacking. Part I "Faust's Study," in *Goethe's Faust*, a new American translation by Carlyle F. MacIntyre, with illustrations by Rockwell Kent, together with the German text (Norfolk, CONN: New Directions, 1941), p.60.

30. See Philip Wheelwrite, *Thr Burning Fountain*, rev. edn (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1971), p.54.

31. Schelling's influence on Coleridge almost made him guilty of plagiarism. See, for example, R.J. White, ed. *The Statesman's Manual*, Bollingen Series LXXV, Routledge and kegan Paul, 1972, vi, p.30.

32. *Coleridge's Miscellaneous Criticism*, ed. T. M. Raysor, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1936), p.29.

33. Coleridge, *The Statesman's Manual*, in the *Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, VI, p.29.

34. Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, I, in the *Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, VII, chapter 9, p.156.

35. Coleridge, *The Statesman's Manual*, in the *Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, VI, p.30.

36. Cf. Peyre, *What is Symbolism?* pp.15, 143.

37. Arthur Symons quoted Carlyle's definition of the symbol and then said, "It is in such a sense as this that the word Symbolism has been used to describe a movement which, during the last generation, has profoundly influenced the course of French literature." See Symons, *Symbolist Movement in Literature*, pp.4-5.

38. Thomas Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus*, Book III, p.165.

39. Ibid, P.167.

40. See Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism: A Short History*, p.121.

41. See 5.1, note 28.

42. Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus*, p.169.

43. Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1907), p.104.

44. Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus*, p.168.

45. Coleridge, *The Statesman's Manual*, in the *Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, VI, p.30.

46. Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus*, p.165.

47. Ibid.

48. Walter Pater, *Appreciations, with an Essay on Style* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1967), p.17.

49. Cf. Feidelson, *Symbolism and American Literature*, pp.119-135.

50. Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism*, III, pp.176, 163.

51. Emerson, *The Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, eds., William H. Gilman and others, 16 vols (Cambridge, MA: Belknap/Harvard, 1960-1982), III, p.315.

52. Emerson, "The Poet," in *The Collected Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. by Alfred R. Ferguson and Jean Ferguson Carr, 4 vols (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1983), III, pp.3-24 (p.6). Hereafter references to this book are given in the text.

53. Wellek, *History of Modern Criticism*, III, p.169.

54. Shelley, "Defence of Poetry," in G. W. Allen and H. H. Clark, eds., *Literary Criticism: Poe to Croce* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1962), p.302.

55. Quoted in C. Day-Lewis. *The Poetic Image* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1947), p.25.

56. M. H. Abrams, *Natural Supernaturalism* (New York: Norton, 1973), p.68. J. Robert Barth, however, argued against this assertion, saying that "the opposite may be right." In my view, their difference arises from their different views of the romantic concept of God, which to my mind is in the main non-Christian. Cf. Barth, *The Symbolic Imagination* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), p.118.

57. Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism*, IV, p.165.

58. Emerson, *The Collected Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, IV, p.121.

59. Li Deyu 李德裕 , "Wen zhang lun" 文章論 , in *Li Wenrao ji* 李文饒 , quoted in Wang Shizhen 王世貞 , "Yiyuan zhi yan," 藝苑卮言 included in Ding Fubao, *Lidai shihua xu bian*, II, p.954 and Ye Xi, *Yuan shi* 原詩 , ed. and annot. by Huo Songlin 霍松林 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue 1979), p.54.

60. See Ernst Cassirer, *An Essay on Man* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944), p.144.

61. Emerson, *The Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, VI, p.18.

62. Cf. T. K. Seung, *Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), p.241ff.

63. Henri Peyre, *What Is Symbolism?* p.3. Edmund Wilson, *Axel's Castle*, p.12; Feidelson lists Poe as one of the "four American symbolists." The other three are Hawthorne, Whitman and Melville. See, *Symbolism and American Literature*, p.6ff. Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism*, III, p.158.

64. Cf. Joseph Chiari, *Symbolism from Poe to Mallarmé* (London: Rockliff, 1956), pp.92-93.

65. Eliot, "From Poe to Valéry," included in the *To Criticize the Critic and Other Writings* (London: Faber and Faber, 1978), p.27.

66. Foreword to Joseph Chiari's *Symbolisme from Poe to Mallarme*, p.VII.

67. Edgar Allan Poe, "The Poetic Principle," in *The Complete Works of Edgar Allan Poe*, ed. by James A. Harrison, 18 vols (New York: AMS Press, 1965), XIV, pp.266-292 (p.266). Further references to this book are given after quotations in the text.

68. See, Baudelaire, "Lettre à Armund Fraisse," Feb.18 1860, *Correspondance* (Conrad, 1948), III, p.40.

69. Coleridge, *Lectures 1811-1812 on Literature*, I, in the *Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, V, p.205 (italics mine).

70. Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," in *The Complete Works of Edgar Allan Poe*, XIV, p.197.

71. *The Complete Works of Edgar Allan Poe*, III, p.457.

72. *Letters of E. A. Poe*, ed. by John Ostrom (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press), Vol. I, pp 257-8.

73. Yvor Winters, *In Defense of Reason* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1960), p.241.

74. Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," in *The Complete Works*, p.195.

75. Charles Feidelson has remarked, "Both views were disastrous in practice: the theory of effect led to crude effects; the theory of supernal beauty led to the romantic claptrap which was Poe's stock in trade." Feidelson, *Symbolism and American Literature*, p.38; Joseph Chiari declares that Poe's theory "will hardly stand a moment of serious reflection," and wonders "what is that ghostly Beauty which Poe has stripped of all human attributes such as Passion and Reason, which is truly the whole man." Chiari, *Symbolism from Poe to Mallarmé*, p.100. A more sympathetic critic is seen in Wellek, who, however, accuses Poe's concept of beauty of being "narrow in its exclusiveness." Wellek, *History of Modern Criticism*, IV, p.156.

76. Literally, exciting/evocative pleasure; cf. 4.2.

77. *Biographia Literaria*, II, chapt. XIV, in *Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, VII, p.8.

78. Guo Shaoyu, ed., *Zhongguo lidai wenlun xuan*, I, p.401.

79. Zhong Rong, *Shi pin*, in Chen Yanjie, p.1.

80. Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism*, IV, p.156.

81. Peyre, *What is Symbolism?* P.31; Bigelow, *The Poet's Third Eye*, p.17.

82. Balakian, ed., *The Symbolist Movement in the Literature of European Languages*, p.18.

83. Gérard de Nerval, "Tout vit, tout agit, tout se correspond," see *Aurelia*, in *Oeuvres*, ed. by Albert Beguin and Jean Richer, 2 vols (Paris: Gallimard, 1956), I, p.403; cf. Arthur Symons, *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*, p.17.

84. *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed., Paul Edwards (London: Macmillan, 1967), VIII, p. 50.

85. Baudelaire, "Victor Hugo," in Hyslop and Hyslop, trans., *Baudelaire as a Literary Critic* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1964), p.239.

86. Baudelaire, "Théophile Gautier," in Hyslop and Hyslop, p.167.

87. In Hyslop and Hyslop, p.186.

88. Baudelaire, "Victor Hugo," in Hyslop and Hyslop, p.239.

89. Baudelaire, "New Notes on Edgar Poe," in Hyslop and Hyslop, p.127.

90. Baudelaire, *Oeuvres complètes*, ed., Claude Pichois, 2 vols (Paris:Gallimard, 1975), I, p.11.

91. William York Tindall, *The Literary Symbol* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962), p.47.

92. Poe, "The Poetic Principle," in *The Complete Works of Edgar Allan Poe*, p.291.

93. Baudelaire, "Marceline Desbordes-Valmore," in Hyslop and Hyslop, p.338.

94. In Hyslop and Hyslop, pp.167-8.

95. Peyre, *What is Symbolism?* p.24.

96. Baudelaire, "Victor Hugo," in Hyslop and Hyslop, p.238.

97. Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism*, IV, p.441.

98. Cf. Qian Zhongshu, "Tong Gan" 通感 , in *Jiu wen si pian* 舊文四篇 (Shanghai: Guji, 1980).

99. Cf. *The Princeton Handbook of Poetic Terms*, p.276.

100. Lilian Furst, *Romanticism*, 2nd edn (London: Methuen, 1976), p.32.

101. Ibid.

102. Mallarmé, "Crisis in Verse," in West ed., *Symbolism, An Anthology*, p.8.

103. Baudelaire, *Oeuvres complètes*, I, p.47.

Harmonie du Soir

Voici venir les temps où vibrant sur sa tige
Chaque fleur s'évapore ainsi qu'un encensoir;
Les sons et les parfums tournent dans I'air du soir;
Valse mélancolique et langoureux vertige!

Chaque fleur s'évapore ainsi qu'un encensoir;
Le violon frémit comme un coeur qu'on afflige;
Valse mélancolique et langoureux vertige!
Le ciel est triste et beau comme un grand reposoir.

Le violon frémit comme un coeur qu'on afflige,
Un coeur tendre, qui hait le néant vaste et noir!
Le ciel est triste et beau comme un grand reposoir;

Le soleil s'est noyé dans son sang qui se fige.

Un coeur tendre, qui hait le néant vaste et noir,
Du passé lumineux recueille tout vestige!
Le soleil s'est noyé dans son sang qui se fige.....
Ton souvenir en moi luit comme un ostensoir!

104. Eliot, *Selected Essays*, 3rd edn (London: Faber and Faber, 1951), p.426.

105. See Peyre, *What Is Symbolism?* p.27.

106. Eliot, *Selected Essays*, p.426.

107. Mallarmé, "Crisis in Verse," in T.G. West ed., *Symbolism*, p.5.

108. Wallace Fowlie, *Mallarmé*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962), p.235.

109. It is said that when he showed the manuscript of *Un Coup de dés* to Valéry, he asked the younger man whether it did not seem to be an act of madness; and that before his death, he requested his daughter to burn all his papers and to publish nothing posthumously.

110. José Ortega y Gasset, *Velazquez, Goya and the Dehumanization of Art*, trans. Alexis Brown (London: Studio Vista, 1972), p.75.

111. See, for example, Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism: A Short History*, p.592; J. Porter Houston, *Toward the Poems of Mallarmé* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965), p.4; C.M.Bowra, *The Heritage of Symbolism*, p.5; Charles Chadwick, *Symbolism* (London: Methuen, 1971), pp.4, 6.

112. Joseph Chiari, *Symbolism from Poe to Mallarmé*, p.133.

113. Wilson, *Axel's Castle*, p.20.

114. Poe, "The Poetic Principle," in Allen and Clark, p.351.

115. Ortega y Gasset, p.75.

116. William York Tindall, *The Literary Symbol*, p.48.

117. Bowra, *The Heritage of Symbolism*, p.11.

118. Jacques Derrida, "The Double Session," in *Dissemination* (London: Athlone Press, 1981), p.206.

119. Mallarmé, "Crisis in Verse," in West ed., *Symbolism*, p.7.

120. Ibid, p.8.

121. Ibid, p.7.

122. Mallarmé, *Reponse a une Enquête*, quoted in Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism: A Short History*, p.592.

123. Frye, "Three Meanings of Symbolism," in *Yale French Studies*, 9 (1952), pp.13-14.

124. Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author," in David Lodge, ed., *Modern Criticism and Theory* (London: Longman, 1988), p.168 (italics mine).

125. Mallarmé, "Crise de Vers," *Oeuvres complète*, (Paris: Gallimard, 1945), p.366; and *Correspondance II*, (Paris: Gallimard, 1959), p.242.

126. Barthes gives an example of the realist "castrating objectivity" at the beginning of his essay "The Death of the Author."

127. See Wang Guowei 王國維 , *Renjian Cihua* 人間詞話 , ed. by Xu Diaofu 徐調孚 (Beijing: Renmin, 1980), p.191.

128. See Chadwick, *Symbolism*, p.35.

129. Ibid.

130. Michel Foucault, *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*, trans. by Donald Bouchard (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), p.116.

131. See Julia Kristeva, "The Ethics of Linguistics," in David Lodge, *Modern Criticism and Theory*, p.232.

132. Fredric Jameson, *The Prisonhouse of Language* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), p.31.

133. Mallarmé, "Crisis in Verse," in West ed., *Symbolism*, pp.9-10.

134. West, p.8.

135. West, p.7.

136. In Victor Erlich, *Russian Formalism: History-Doctrine* (The Hague: Mouton, 1980), p.219.

137. Mallarmé, "Crisis in Verse," in West, p.10.

138. Ibid.

139. Ibid.

140. Preface to Mallarmé's *Poesies*, quoted in Balakian, *The Symbolist Movement*, p.281.

141. Joseph Chiari, *Symbolism from Poe to Mallarmé*, p.144.

142. Many critics have attributed Valéry's poetic silence to his unhappy love affair, which seems to me just part of the reason and not the most important at that. The true reason, I would suggest, lies in the fact that anybody who follows Mallarmé's doctrine to the letter would find it almost impossible to write anything. Thus Valéry spoke of his master's "fine and precise analysis" having led him to "give up the game." See C.G. Whiting, *Paul Valéry* (London: Athlone Press, 1978); A.E. Mackay, *The Universal Self* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1961); E. Wilson, *Axel's Castle*, pp.65-66.

143. For example, Wilson, p.72.

144. Balakian, *The Symbolist Movement*, p.272.

145. Cf. Lloyd Austin, *Poetic Principles and Practice*, (London: Cambrige University Press, 1987), p.228.

146. T.S.Eliot, "A Brief Introduction to the Method of Paul Valéry," Paul Valéry's *Le Serpent* (London: The Criterion, 1924).

147. C.M.Bowra, *The Heritage of Symbolism*, pp.27, 28.

148. Cf. C.M. Crow, *Paul Valéry and the Poetry of Voice* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p.153ff; A.E. Mackay, *The Universal Self*, p.140.

149. See C.G.Whiting, *Paul Valéry*, p.24.

150. Bowra, *The Heritage of Symbolism*, p.22.

151. Ibid.

152. Quoted in C.M.Crow, p.75.

153. Bowra, *The Heritage of Symbolism*, p.22.

154. Austin, *Poetic Principles and Practice*, p.228.

155. Ibid.

156. See, for example, Bowra, p.30.

157. See Wilson, *Axel's Castle*, pp.69-70.

158. Valéry, *Cahier II*, p.1054.

159. In Wellek, *Four Critics*, p.35.

160. In West, *Symbolism, An Anthology*, pp.47-49.

161. West, p.50.

162. See Wellek, *Four Critics*, p.35.

163. Austin, *Poetic Principles and Practice*, p.240.

164. Valéry, "Situation de Baudelaire," in *Oeuvres*, vol.1, p.611.

165. Mallarmé, "Crisis in Verse," in west, p.10.

166. Mukarovsky, "Standard Language and Poetic Language," in *Linguistics and Literary Style*, pp.43-44.

167. Cf. Peyre, p.143; Wilson, p.32; Lothar Honnighaus, *The Symbolist Tradition in English Literature*, trans. by Gisela Honnighause (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

168. Yeats, "Symbolism in Painting," in *Essays and Introductions* (London: Macmillan, 1969), pp.146-152 (p.146).

169. Frank Kermode said that Arthur Symons played a crucial role in synthesising "the earlier English tradition - particularly Blake ... with Pater and those European symbolists he knew so well." See *Romantic Image* (London: Ark, 1986), p.107.

170. Symons, *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*, p.5.

171. Yeats, "The Symbolism of Poetry," *in Essays and Introductions*, p.155. Further references to this essay are given after quotations in the text.

172. Yeats, "Symbolism in Painting," in *Essays and Introductions*, p.148.

173. Ibid, p.146.

174. Ibid, pp.149-150.

175. Mallarmé, "Crisis in Verse," in West, p.8.

176. J. Hillis Miller, "The Two Allegories," in M.W. Bloomfield ed. *Allegory, Myth, and Symbol* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), pp.355-388 (p.368).

177. M.H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981), p.195.

178. Yeats, *Essays and Introductions*, p.147 (italics mine).

179. Miller, "The Two Allegories," p.369.

180. Cf. J. E. Cirlot, ed. *Dictionary of Symbols* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

181. Miller, "The Two Allegories," p.370.

182. Giorgio Melchiori, *The Whole Mystery of Art* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1960), p.18.

183. Emerson, "The Poet," in *The Collected Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, p.11.

184. Yeats, "The Philosophy of Shelley's Poetry," in *Essays and Introductions*, p.87.

185. Yeats, "A General Introduction for my Work," in *Essays and Introductions*, pp.509-526 (p.519).

186. Eliot, "Hamlet," in *Selected Essays*, p.145.

187. Eliseo Vivas, "Objective Correlative of T.S. Eliot," in *Critiques and Essays in Criticism*, ed. by R.W. Stallman (New York: Ronald Press, 1949), pp.391, 393; Wimsatt, and Brooks, *Literary Criticism: A Short History*, p.668.

188. E.g. in his essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent," which Vivas quotes and dismisses as "half-truth." See Vivas, p.390.

189. Eliot, *Sacred Wood* (London: Methuen, 1960), p.170.

190. N.D.Hargrove, *Landscape as Symbolism in the Poetry of T.S. Eliot* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1978), p.6.

191. A line from Eliot's "Ash Wednesday."

192. Harriet Davidson, *T.S.Eliot and Hermaneutics* (Baton Rouge: Lousiana State University, 1985), p.27.

193. Robert Langbaum, *The Poetry of Experience: the Dramatic Monologue in Modern Literary Tradition* (New York: The Norton Library, 1963), pp.30-31.

194. Eliot, *Selected Essays*, p.19.

195. Vivas, "Objective Correlative of T.S. Eliot," p.398.

196. Eliot, *Selected Essays*, p.145.

197. A.P. Frank, "T.S. Eliot's Objective Correlative and the Philosophy of F.H. Bradley," in *JAAC*, 30 (1972), p.314.

198. Vivas, "Objective Correlative of T.S. Eliot," p.400.

199. Eliot, "Isolated Superiority," *Dial*, LXXXIV (1928), p.6, quoted in Mowbray Allan, *Impersonal Theory* (New York: Associated University Presses, 1974), p.137.

200. Eliot, *Selected Essays*, p.320.

201. Eliot, *The Sacred Wood*, p.63.

202. Cf. Allan, *Impersonal Theory*, pp.80-81, pp.90-91; Davidson, *T.S.Eliot and Hermaneutics*, pp.94-95.

203. Critics have mentioned, among others, Byron, Husserl, Nietzsche, W. Pater, F.H. Bradley, W. Allston, as possible sources. See D.J. DeLaura, "Pater and Eliot," *JAAC*, 26 (1965); A.P. Frank, "T.S.Eliot's Objective Correlative and the Philosophy of F. H. Bradley," *JAAC*, 30 (1971), pp.311-7; N. Wright, "A Source for T.S. Eliot's 'Objective Correlation'?" *American Literature*, 41 (1969-70).

204. As far as I know, only Wimsatt and Brooks in their *Literary Criticism: A Short History* trace the doctrine of Objective Correlative to "the theory and practice of the French symbolists." See pp.667-668.

205. Eliot, *On Poetry and Poets* (London: Faber and Faber, 1957), p.252. It should be noted here, however, this is not entirely true. Eliot did learn a lot

from English poetry, especially from the Metaphysical poets for the metaphor and dramatic voice and perhaps from Tennyson for the use of landscape as symbols of the state of mind. Yet his emphasis on French influence is equally justifiable; for it is through French symbolists, especially Laforgue and perhaps Chinese poetry via the introduction of Ezra Pound, that he discovered the Metaphysical poets.

206. Eliot, *To Criticize the Critic* (London: Faber, 1978), p.58.

207. *To Criticize the Critic*, p.126.

208. John J. Duffy, "T.S. Eliot's Objective Correlative," in *New England Quarterly*, 42 (1969), pp.108-115.

209. Krishna Rayan, *"Rasa* and the Objective Correlative, *BJA*, 5 (1965), pp.246-260.

210. See *Encyclopedia of Literature and Criticism*, ed., M.Coyle *and others*, (London, 1990), p.295.

211. Martin Turnell, *Baudelaire: A Study of His Poetry* (Norfolk, CONN: New Direction, n.d.), p.35.

Chapter 6

1. Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, translated from *Cours de linguistique generale* (Paris, 1916, London, 1978), p.118. Friedrich D.E.Schleiermacher, "The Aphorisms of Hermeneutics," in G.L. Ormiston and A.D. Schrift, eds., *The Hermeneutic Tradition* (New York: State University of New York, 1990), p.67.

2. Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), p.71.

3. Morton W. Bloomfield, "Allegory as Interpretation," *New Literary History*, 3 (1971), p.304.

4. For example, William Y.Tindall says, "The words symbol and sign are commonly interchangeable." (See Tindall, *Literary Symbol*, p.5 and pp.104-5.) René Wellek points out that "By 'symbolic' Hegel means what we today would call 'allegory' art in which there is no concrete togetherness of meaning and form." (See Wellek, *A History of Modern Literary Criticism*, II, p.320.) However, although Hegel sometimes uses symbol and allegory indiscriminately, he has also tried to distinguish these two terms and at one place he accuses Wickelmann of "confusing symbol and allegory" (See Hegel, *Aesthetics*, p.312, pp.400-1.) Thomas Carlyle says, "Pagan Religion is indeed an Allegory, a Symbol of what men felt and knew about the Universe; ..." (See Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*, p.6.) Henri Peyre says that Baudelaire used allegory as he used symbol. (See Peyre, *What is Symbolism?* p.92.) Hans Eichner says that Schlegel "simply uses allegory where we would nowadays say symbol." See Paul. de Man, *Blindness and Insight* (London: Methuen, 1983), p.190.

5. Zhu Xi, *Shi jing ji zhuan*, "guan ju."

6. See Zhu Xi, *Zhu Zi yu lei*, *juan* 80, p.2070. Zhu, however, in his practical criticism, fails to keep to his own definitions and often slips into the realm of interpretation. Hence he has to use those expressions such as *"fu* as well as *xing*" and *"bi* as well as *xing*."

7. Xu Fuguan, "Shi shi de bi xing," in Lin Qingzhang, ed., *Shi jing yanjiu lun ji*, p.86.

8. My discussion here is indebted to Viti Elgar, "The Interpretation of Symbols: Criteria, Methods and Implications," in *Comparison*, 6 (1977), pp.5-10.

9. Ferdinand. de Saussure, "Nature of the Linguistic Sign," in David Lodge, ed., *Modern Criticism and Theory*, p.12.

10. Hans Kreitler and Shulamith Kreitler, *Psychology of the Arts*, (Durham, 1972), p.317; Paul Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay On Interpretation*, trans. Denis Savage (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1970), pp.12-13.
11. Graciela Maturo, *Claves simbolicas de Garcia Marquez*, p.33, quoted in Elgar, "The Interpretation of Symbols," p.7.
12. Kreitler and Kreitler, *Psychology of the Arts*, pp.312, 317.
13. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New York: Crossroad, 1975), p.135.
14. Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy*, p.112.
15. Yuan Chen 元稹, "Xi gui jueju" 西歸絕句.
16. Wellek and Warren, *Theory of Literature*, p.189.
17. *Chun qiu Zuo zhuan* 春秋左傳, *Wengong qi nian* 文公七年, in *Chun qiu Zuo zhuan zhu su* 春秋左傳注疏, *juan* 18, *Wenyuange*, 143-404/b.
18. We may quote Philip Wheelwright's definition of symbolism:"Instead of saying that A is like B or that A is B, the poet simply talks about B, without making any overt reference to A at all. You know, however, that he intends A all the time, or, better say that you know he intends an A; for you may not have a very clear idea of what A is and even if you have got an idea, somebody else may have a different one. This is generally called 'symbolism'." Wheelwright, *Metaphor and Reality* (Indiana, 1962), p.107.
19. Liu Xie, *Wen xin diao long*, "Bixing," in Fan Wenlan, II, p.601.
20. Wellek & Warren, *Theory of Literature*, pp.193-4.
21. Du Fu 杜甫, "Ji Chen Jiazhou (Chen Shen)" 寄岑嘉州, in *Quan Tang shi*, IV, p.2494. .
22. Han Yu 韓愈, "Zui zhen Zhang Bishu" 醉贈張秘書, in *Quan Tang shi*, V, p.3774.

23. Li Bai, "Chou Yin Zuoming jian zhen wuyunqiu ge" 酬殷佐明見贈五雲裘歌, in *Quan Tang shi*, III, p.1728.

24. Wang Liqi, ed., *Wen jin mi fu lun jian zhu*, p.278.

25. Wang Yinlin 王應麟, *Kun xue ji wen* 困學紀聞, annot. by Weng Yuanqi 翁元圻, 3 vols (Shanghai: Shanwu, 1935), I, p.223.

26. In *Selections from the Book of Songs*, trans. by Yang Xianyi and others, Panda Books (Beijing: Waiwen, 1983), pp.35-6; cf. Karlgren, p.42-p.43.

27. See, for example, Wu Qiao, *Wei lu shihua, juan* 1, *Sheyuan cong shu* edn, 130-11. There is another meaning possible. "Xu zuo" may also mean that the real meaning of a poem should be sought outside the text.

28. Liu, *Wen xin diao long*, "Bi xing," in *Wen xin diao long zhu*, II, p.602.

29. Mill, *Literary Essays*, p.69.

30. Ye Xi, *Yuan shi*, p.32.

31. Xie Zhen, *Siming shihua, juan* 3, p.77.

32. Tao Yuanming 陶淵明, "Yin jiu" 飲酒, in *Tao Yuanmin ji* 陶淵明集, ed. by Wang Yao 王遙 (Beijing: Zuojia Chubanshe, 1956), p.63.

33. *Wen jin mi fu lun jian zhu*, p.158.

34. E.M.Tillyard, *Poetry, Direct and Oblique* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1934), p.5.

35. Ibid, pp.67-9.

36. Ibid, p.69.

37. Bai Juyi 白居易, "Handan zhi chuye si jia" 邯鄲至除夜思家, in *Quan Tang shi*, VII, p.4834.

38. Tillyard, *Poetry, Direct and Oblique*, p.30.

39. Schelling, *The Philosophy of Art*, p.46.

40. Ibid, p.48.

41. Hegel, *Aesthetics*, I, p.305.

42. Ibid, p.313.

43. Goethe, *Maxims and Reflections*, nos.1112, 1113

44. George Vanor, *L'Art symboliste* (Paris: Chez le bibliopole Vanier, 1889), p.38.

45. J.H. van der Hoop, *Character and the Unconscious*, p.119, quoted in H. Flanders Dunbar, *Symbolism in Medieval Thought* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1961), p.13.

46. *Coleridge's, Miscellaneous Criticism*, ed., T.M.Raysor (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1936), p.29.

47. Zhi Yu, *Wenzhang liu bie lun*, in *Quan Shanggu, Sandai, Qin, Han, Sanguo, Liuchao wen*, II, p.1905.

48. Yang Xiong 揚雄, *Fa yan* 法言, "Wu zi," 吾子, in *Zhongguo lidai wenlun xuan*, I, p.62.

49. Zhi Yu, *Wenzhang liu bie lun*, same as n.47.

50. Liu Xie, *Wen xin diao long*, "Quan fu," in *Wen xin diao long zhu*, I, p.136, trans., Vincent Shih, *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, pp.96-7.

51. Liu Xie, *Wen xin diao long*, "Bi xing," in *Wen xin diao long zhu*, II, p.602.

52. Zhong Rong, *Shi pin*, in Chen Yanjie, *Shi pin zhu*, p.4, my translation adapted from Wixted, in *Theories of the Arts in China*, pp.238-9.

53. Yang Shen 楊慎, *Shenan shihua* 升庵詩語, *juan* 11, included in *Lidai shihua xu bian* 歷代詩話續編, ed. by Ding Fubao, 3 vols (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1983), II, p.868.

54. Wang Fuzhi, *Gu shi ping xuan* 古詩評選, *juan* 4, "Shan shan cai miwu" 上山采靡蕪 in *Chuanshan yi shu*, LXXV, p.4.

55. Wang Shizhen 王世貞, *Yi yuan zhi yan*, 藝苑卮言, *juan* 4, included in Ding Fubao, *Lidai shihua xu bian*, II, p.1010.

56. Susanne Langer, *Feeling and Form*, p.228.

57. Morton Bloomfield, "Allegory as Interpretation," pp.311-2.

58. Liu, *Yi gai*, "Fu gai," p.97.

59. Goethe, *Reflexions and Maxims*, p.175.

60. Norman Friedman, "Imagery: From Sensation to Symbol," *JAAC*, 12 (1953), p.31.

61. It is perhaps interesting to note that a similar phrase to "fu er xing" or "fu er bi" - "the literal allegorical pattern" - has been coined by a Western scholar. See Elizabeth Salter, *Piers Plowman: An Introduction* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962), p.75.

62. Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修, *Liuyi shihua* 六一詩話, in Ho Wenhuan, ed. *Lidai shihua* 歷代詩話, 2 vols (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1981), I, p.267.

63. Wu Qiao 吳喬, *Xikun fa wei* 西崑發微, *Sheyuan cong shu* edn, 105-1.

64. Liu Xie, *Wen xin diao long*, "Bi xing," in *Wen xin diao long zhu*, II, p.602, my translation. Cf. Zhou Zhenfu, *Wen xin diao long xuan yi*, p.210; Vincent Shih, *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, p.379.

65. Liu Xie, *Wen xin diao long*, "Yin xiu," in *Wen xin diao long zhu*, II, p.632, my translation.

66. Ibid, my translation.

67. Chen Qiyuan 陳啟源, *Ji gu bian* 稽古篇, cited in Xu Dongfang 許東方, ed., *Shixue yanjiu* 詩學研究 (Taipei, 1978).

68. Ibid.

69. Goethe, *Reflexions and Maxims*, no.314.

70. See W.B.Yeats, "Symbolism in Painting," in *Essays & Introductions*, p.146.

71. Hegel, *Aesthetics*, I, pp.399-400.

72. F.T.Vischer, *Aesthetics*, III, p.467, discussed in Benedetto Croce, "The Concept of Allegory," in *Philosophy, Poetry, History: An Anthology of Essays* (London, 1966), p.376.

73. W.B.Yeats, "Symbolism in Painting," in *Essays & Introductions*, pp.147, 148.

74. W. M. Urban, *Language and Reality* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1939), pp.422-4.

75. W.H.Auden, *The Enchafed Flood*, or *The Romantic Iconography* (London: Faber and Faber, 1951), p.61.

76. Langbaum, *The Poetry of Experience*, pp.65-6.

77. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, p.67.

78. Ibid.

79. I believe that Kant's notion of two kinds of beauty is the philosophical basis of the contrast between allegory and symbolism. Kant wrote, "There are two kinds of beauty: free beauty, or beauty which is merely dependent. The first presupposes no concept of what the object should be; the second does presuppose such a concept and, with it, an answering perfection of the object." See *The Critique of Judgement*, p.72.

80. See Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of Germanic Tragic Drama*, trans. by John Osborne (London: NLB, 1977), pp.159-185; Paul de Man, "The Rhetoric of Temporality," in *Blindness and Insight*, pp.183-208; Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism*, p.89ff; Angus Fletcher, *Allegory: The Theory of Symbolic Mode* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1964); and Hazard Adams, *Philosophy of the Literary Symbolic* (Tallahassee: University Press of Florida, 1983), p.3, and p.355ff.

81. See 6.1, p.178.

82. Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism*, p.90.

83. Ibid.

84. Chen Tingchuo, *Baiyuzai cihua*, pp.277-8.

85. Paul Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory*, p.64.

86. Tzvetan Todorov, *Symbolism and Interpretation*, trans. by Catherine Porter (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983), p.19.

87. Jonathan Culler, *Structuralist Poetics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975), p.128.

88. *Mao shi zhu su*, "Guan ju."

89. Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism*, p.89.

90. Cf. *The Cambridge History of China*, vol.1, ed. D.Twitchett and M.Loewe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp.197-212.

91. Cf. Morton Bloomfield, "Allegory as Interpretation," p.301.

92. *yi yi ni zhi* 以意逆志, see *Mencius* "Wan zhang 萬章," my translation. Cf. James Legge, p.353. There has been mainly two different readings of the word "yi 意." It is interpreted either as the thoughts of the reader as Zhu Xi held or as the surface meaning of a poem as Wu Qi explained it. However, critics have no difference in interpreting the word "zhi" as the intention of the author or the authorial meaning. See Zhu Xi, *Menzi jie zhu*; and Wu Qi, "Liuchao xuan shi ding lun yuan qi," quoted in Ruan Guohua, "Menzi Shi shuo fu yi," in *Gudai wenxue lilun yanjiu*, 1983, no.9, pp.138-153.

93. Su Shi 蘇軾, "Busuanzi," 卜算子, in Huang Shen 黃昇 ed., *Tang Song zhu xian jue miao ci xuan* 唐宋諸賢絕妙詞選, 2 vols, *Si bu cong kan* edn, 2091-2. Trans. by Eugene Eoyang, in *Sunflower Splendour*, p.351.

卜算子

缺月挂疏桐，漏断人初静。時有幽人獨往來，縹緲孤鴻影。　驚起却回頭，有恨無人省。揀盡寒枝不肯栖，寂寞沙洲冷。

94. Tongyang Jushi 鮦陽居士 , *Fu Ya ge ci xuan* 復雅歌詞選 , quoted in Huang Shen ed., *Tang Song zhu xian jue miao ci xuan*, vol. 2, *Si bu cong kan*, 2091-2.

95. *Mao shi zhu su*, "Guan ju."

96. Wilhelm/Baynes, *The Book of Changes*, pp.540-1.

97. *Zhu Zi yu lei*, *juan* 80, VI, p.2069.

98. Yan Can 嚴粲 , *Shi ji* 詩緝 , *juan* 1, p.14.

99. Zhu Xi, *Zhu Wen Gong wenji*, *juan* 40, XI, p.34; cf. *Zhu Zi yu lei*, *juan* 80, VI, pp.2082-88.

100. Wang Fuzhi, *Jiangzai shihua*, *juan* 1, "Shi yi," 薑齋詩話、詩繹 , p.139.

101. Tan Xian 譚獻 , *Fu Tang ci lu xu* 複堂詞錄序 , included in *Zhongguo lidai wenlun xuan*, III, p.335.

102. See Morton Bloomfield, "Allegory as Interpretation," p.301.

103. Roland Barthes, *S/Z*, trans. by Richard Miller (London: Cape, 1975), p.4.

104. Zhu Qingyu 朱慶餘 , "Gui yi xian Zhang Shuibu" 閨意獻張水部 , in *Quan Tang shi*, VIII, p.5892, my translation.

洞房昨夜停紅燭，待曉堂前拜舅姑。
妝罷低聲問夫婿，畫眉深淺入時無。

105. Basil Willey, *The Seventeenth-Century Background* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1934), p.62. However, M.H.Abrams, in his *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (p.87), suggests that St Paul (d. ca. A.D. 65) was the first to interpret the Bible in a typological mood.

106. See *Medieval Literary Theory and Criticism*, eds., A.J.Minnis and A.B.Scott, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988), p.241.

107. See *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, ed. by Everett Ferguson (New York: Garland, 1990), p.395.

108. See J.W.H.Atkins, *English Literary Criticism: The Medieval Phase* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1943), p.79.

109. See *Medieval Literary Theory and Criticism*, p.241; cf. Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism: A Short History*, p.147.

110. Allen H. Gilbert, ed., *Literary Criticism: Plato to Dryden* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1962), p.202; cf. *Medieval Literary Theory and Criticism*, pp.459-460.

111. J.D.Frodsham, Preface to *Goddesses, Ghoasts, and Demons: The Collected Poems of Li He*, trans. J.D.Frodsham (London: Anvil Press Poetry, 1983), p.li.

112. Erwin Panofsky, "Iconography and Iconology: Introduction to the Study of Renaissance Art," in *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (New York: The Overlook Press, 1974), pp.26-39.

113. Todorov, *Symbolism and Interpretation*, pp.52-56.

114. Ibid, p.56.

115. See Emilio Betti, "Hermeneutics as the General Methodology of the *Geisteswissenschaften*," in *The Hermeneutic Tradition*, ed. by Gayle L. Ormiston and Alan D. Schrift (New York: State University of New York Press, 1990), p.162.

116. See Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, p.276.

117. Ibid, p.277.

118. Ibid, pp.274-275.

119. Hans R. Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), p.139.

Chapter 7

1. Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, I, Chapter IX, in the *Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, VII, p.156.
2. Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus*, pp.164-5.
3. Goethe, "On Paintings of Philostratus," cited in Peyre, *What Is Symbolism?* p.19.
4. See chapt.4.
5. See 2.5.
6. See 2.2.
7. See 3.2, 6.2.
8. Huang Zongxi 黄宗羲 , "Wang Fucheng shi xu" 汪扶晨詩序 , included in *Zhongguo lidai wen lun xuan*, I, p.6.
9. See 6.4.
10. Yeats, "The Symbolism of Poetry," in West, ed., *Symbolism: An Anthology*, p.16.
11. Pound, *Make It New*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1935), p.187.
12. Harold Nicolson, *Paul Verlaine* (London: Constable, 1921), p.236ff.
13. Bowra, *The Heritage of Symbolism*, p.9.
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15. Thomas Carlyle, *Critical and Miscellaneous Essays*, 5 vols (London: Chapman and Hall, 1905), III, p.31.
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18. Liu Xie, *Wen xin diao long*, "Shen si," in Vincent Shih, p.299.

19. *Zhuang zi*, "Ren jian shi" 莊子·人間世, trans., James Liu, in *Chinese Theories of Literature*, p.31.

20. *Xijing za ji*, *juan* 2 西京雜記, cited in Qian Zhongshu, *Tan yi lu*, p.280.

21. In Wang Liqi, *Wen jing mi fu lun jian zhu*, p.306.

22. Ibid.

23. *Da Dai Li* 大戴禮, *Xia xiao zhen*, *Wu yue* 夏小正·五月, in Dai De 戴德, *Da Dai Li ji* 大戴禮記, annot. by Lu Bian 盧辯, *Wenyuange*, 128-415/b.

24. James Liu, *Chinese Theories of Literature*, p.57.

25. See Lentricchia and McLaughlin, ed., *Critical Terms for Literary Study*, p.148.

26. See Jolande Jacobi, *Complex, Archetype, Symbol in the Psychology of C.G.Jung*. Trans. from the German by Ralph Manheim (New York: Pantheon Books, 1959), p.88.

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28. Ibid, pp.148-150

29. Ibid, p.149

30. Lu Ji, *Wen fu*, trans., Achilles Fang, p.532.

31. Hugh Kenner, *The Poetry of Ezra Pound*, quoted in Wimsatt and Brooks, p.672.

32. See, F.O.Matthiessen, *The Achievement of T.S.Eliot*, 3rd edn (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), p.12.

33. Senior, *The Way Down and Out*, p.xii.

34. Ibid, p.xiii.

35. Virgil Aldrich, *Philosophy of Art*, p.11; L. W. Marvick, *Mallarmé and the Sublime* (New York: State University of New York, 1986), p.82.

36. See 6.3.

37. Kant, *The Critique of Judgement*, pp.175-6.

38. Hegel, *Aesthetics*, p.305.

39. Ibid, p.306.

40. Carl G. Jung and others, *Man and His Symbol*, (New York: Doubleday, 1964), p.4.

41. Quoted in Jolande Jacobi, *Complex, Archetype, Symbol in the Psychology of C.G.Jung*, p.88.

42. *Gu shi ping xuan, juan* 4, in *Chuanshan yi shu*, LXXV, pp.5-6.

43. Langer, *Feeling and Form*, p.226.

44. Langer, p.227.

45. Heidegger, *What Is Called Thinking*, English trans. by Fred D.Wieck and J.Glenn Gray (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), p.71.

46. Mallarmé, "Sainte," "Crise de Vers," "Sur Poe," in *Oeuvres complètes*, p.54, p.367 and p.872.

47. See 6.4.

48. See 3.2.

49. See 3.3.

50. Sikong Tu, *Shi pin*, in *Zhongguo lidai wenlun xuan*, II, p.205.

51. See, 4.2.

52. Cf. Jakobson, "The Metaphoric and Metonymic Poles," in Lodge, *Modern Criticism and Theory*, p.57ff.

53. See 6.3.

54. Lentricchia and McLaughlin, ed., *Critical Terms for Literary Study*, p.84.

55. Her eye-brows are like willow-leaves, her soft waist is like pliable willow branches; like willow branches at the disposal of the wind, she is at the disposal of other people, her fate is like willow catkins drifting along with the wind.

56. For example, Jakobson, in Lodge ed., *Modern Criticism and Theory*, p.57; *The Practical Imagination*, ed. by Northrop Frye and others (New York: Harper & Row, 1983), p.207.

57 See, for example, Kenneth Burke, "Four Master Tropes," in *A Grammar of Motives* (Berkeley: University of Carfornia Press, 1945); Todorov, "Synecdoques," *Communications*, 16 (1970); Group [mu], (J. Dubois and others), *A General Rhetoric*, trans. by Paul B. Burrell and Edgar M. Stotkin (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1981).

58. William Blake, "Auguries of Innocence," in *The Complete Poems and Prose of William Blake*, ed. by David V. Erdman, rev. edn (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), p.490.

59. See 5.1.

60. Quoted in Vietor, *Goethe the Thinker* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1950), p.14.

61. Coleridge, *The Statesman's Manual*, p.30.

62. Liu Xizai, *Yi gai,* "Shi gai," p.74.

63. Ibid, p.82.

64. My translation, cf. Karlgren, p.112.

65. See *Zhong yong* 中庸 , or *The Doctrine of the Mean*, in Legge, I, pp.392-3.

66. Cf. Qian Zhongshu, *Tan yi lu*, p.222ff.

67. Quoted in Feng Yulan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, I, p.372.

68. Thurley, *The Romantic Predicament*, p.62.

69. Marjorie H. Nicolson, *Mountain Gloom and Moumtain Glory: the Development of the Aesthetics of the Infinite* (New York: Norton Library, 1963) p.3; cf. J.D. Frodsham, "Landscape Poetry in China and Europe," *Comparative Literature*, XIX, 3 (1967), pp.68-104.

70. Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 , *Chunqiu fan lu*, *juan* 19, "Li yuan shen" 春秋繁露、立元神 , in *Chunqiu fan lu jin zhu jin yi*, p.156.

71. Dong Zhongshu, *Chunqiu fan lu*, *juan* 81, "Tian di ying yang" 天地陰陽 , in *Chunqiu fan lu jin zhu jin yi*, p.439.

72. Dong Zhongshu, *Chunqiu fan lu*, *juan* 56, "Ren fu tian su" 人符天數 , in *Chunqiu fan lu jin zhu jin yi*, p.327. Cf. Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China*, II, p.300; Qian Zhongshu, *Guan zui bian*, II, p.506f.

73. Cited in Needham, II, pp.300-1.

74. Dong Zhongshu, *Chun qiu fan yu*, "Yin yang yi" 春秋繁露、陰陽義, *juan* 49, in *Chunqiu fan lu jin zhu jin yi*, p.309.

75. Lao Zi, *Dao de jing*, chapt. 25.

76. Dong, *Chun qiu fan lu*, *juan* 57, "Tong lei xian dong" 春秋繁露、同類相動 , in *Chunqiu fan lu jin zhu jin yi*, p.331.

77. Wang Chong 王充, *Lun heng*, *juan* 10 論衡 , cited in Needham, II, p.283.

78. Dong Zhongshu, *Chun qiu fan lu*, *juan* 57. English translation in Needham, II, p.282.

79. Ibid, p.281.

80. Cf. Qian Zhongshu, *Tan yi lu*, p.227f.

81. *Wu deng hui yuan* 五燈會元 , *juan* 3.

82. Cf. 5.3.

83. See W.K.C.Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosphy* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1962), p.54f, p.69, p.87, p.115, and p.425.

84. Cf. R.G. Collingwood, *The Idea of Nature* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), p.8f; Needham, II, p.294f.

85. Collingwood, *The Idea of Nature*, p.3f.

86. Cf. J.R.Barth, *The Symbolic Imagination* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), p.5ff.

87. Cf. John Senior, *The Way Down and Out*, chapt.10.

88. Cf. Patricia Clements, *Baudelaire and the English Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), esp., chapt. 6 "The Imagists."

89. See, for example, Vincent Yang, "From French Symbolism to Chinese Symbolism," *Tamkang Review*, 1987, vol.17, pp.221-44.

90. Needham, II, p.291.

91. The *Shi wei han shen wu* 詩緯含神霧 says, "Shi zhe, chi ye 詩者, 持也 ." See *Wei shu ji chen*, ed. by Kouzan Yasui and Shouhachi Nakamura, 6 vols (Tokyo: Meitoku, 1971), III, p.26.

92. *Lun yu*, "Ba yi 八佾 ," in James Legge, I, p.161.

93. *Fa hu qing, zhi hu li yi* 發乎情, 止乎禮義.

94. *Sheng cheng wen, wei zhi yin* 聲成文 謂之音 .

95. *Wen, rou, dun, hou* 溫柔敦厚 . These words are first seen in the *Li ji* 禮 記 , where in the chapter "Jing jie" 经 解 (*Li ji zhu su* 禮記注疏 , *Wenyuange*, 116-309/b), they are used to describe people who have been educated through the study of the *Shi jing*. Later, fortunate enough for Chinese poetry, these are upheld not only as ethical but also aesthetical criteria. Du Fu, for example, has been considered by many as the perfect embodiment of these criteria both in his personality and in his poetic writings.

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97. Thurley, *The Romantic Predicament*, p.61.

98. Ibid.

99. Cf. Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism: A Short History*, p.36.

100. Lilian Furst, *Romanticism*, p.52.

101. Langer, *Feeling and Form*, p.259.

102. Hegel, *Aesthetics*, p.1123.

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